



*Dubuque Dream Center Academy*

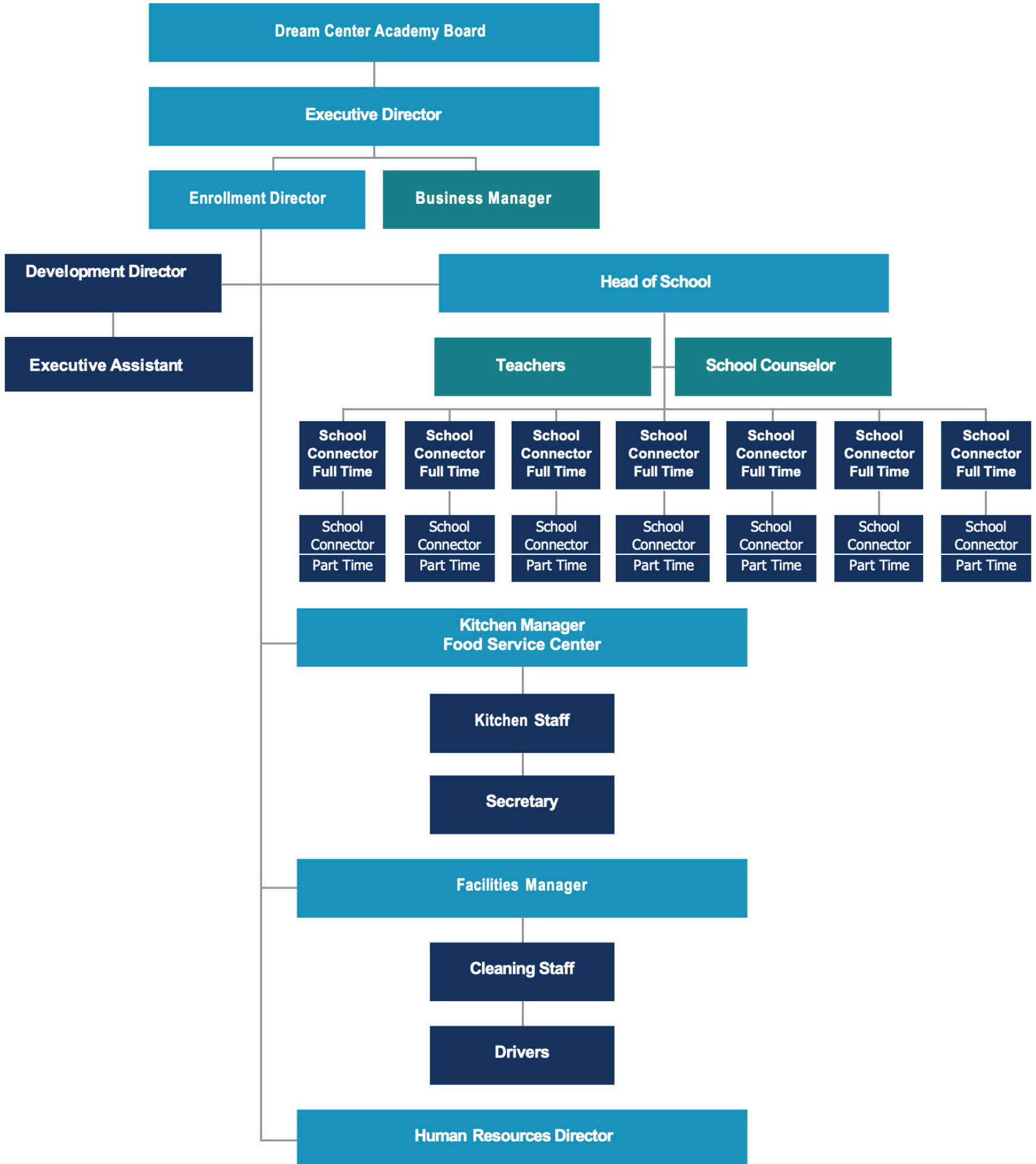
**PARENT HANDBOOK  
2024**

**Dream**   
**Academy**  
DUBUQUE DREAM CENTER

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# General





# History-School Purpose-Mission Statement-Student Needs Assessment

## HISTORY

The Dubuque Dream Center was established in July 2013 to build on Dr. Kings Dream by unifying our community across racial and socioeconomic lines to embrace and empower youth and families impacted by generational poverty.

The Dubuque Dream Center is structured to provide programs that address the social, academic, and economic needs of youth and families in a coordinated, systematic structure.

The Dubuque Dream Center has impacted youth for 10 years, utilizing our In Your Life Mentoring Model. Annually, an average of 70% of Dream Center student's progress toward reading proficiency and 80% of student's progress towards math proficiency.

## SCHOOL PURPOSE

The Dubuque Dream Center is strengthening our impact model by expanding to offer a non-denominational Urban Christian School in our Community called the Dubuque Dream Center Academy, to increase the number of students who are disciples of Jesus Christ, have successful academic outcomes, and are prepared for college or career.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy is to Impact Youth, Strengthen Families, and Building Community through Christian Education.

## STUDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Low Reading and Math Proficiency Scores

Reading and math proficiency data from Dubuque Community Schools since 2010-2023 reveals a significant disparity among scores for low-income and minority students. A study conducted by the University of Iowa Urban and Regional Planning revealed that Dubuque experienced

a significant shift in youth population in 2000-2010 with an increase in non-white children by 124.3%. Dubuque's Title 1 Schools experienced the highest minority increase.<sup>1</sup>

While 66.2% of Dubuque students in 2023 were proficient in reading, and 68.11% in math, only 34% of African American students were proficient in reading and 31.88% in math.

The National Campaign for Grade-Level Reading notes that reading proficiency by third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success.<sup>2</sup>

This local data and national assessment influenced the need to establish the Dubuque Dream Center Academy to increase the percentage of low-income and minority students performing at reading and math proficiency. Our goal is for the percentage of the students we serve to exceed the District average of 70% or more proficiency in reading and math, support and prepare our students to graduate from High School and prepare our students to successfully enter college or a career.

### Shortage of Affordable & Quality After School Care

An essential service to combat poverty is removing barriers to accessible and affordable childcare, that can prevent residents from entering the workforce and taking classes to train for high-demand careers. Dubuque County experienced a 12% decline in daycare providers from 2017 to 2022 (a decrease of 12 childcare programs in Dubuque Iowa)<sup>3</sup>

"We've had people decline jobs in our community because they couldn't find adequate childcare," Dietzel said. "Or we'll have one spouse start working and the other one can't enter the workforce because of that childcare barrier."<sup>4</sup>

"For Dubuque, a healthy community means equitable access to childcare and child development," Duster said. The Dubuque Dream Center Academy will also continue to provide quality and affordable after-school care for children of working families, that we serve. The Dream Center seeks to support the present workforce and develop the future workforce.

# Student Needs Assessment

## Shortage of Quality Spark Activities for low-income children.

Search Institute, a research center for youth development, has developed a concept called “sparks”: the interests and passions young people have within them that light a fire in their lives and express the essence of who they are and what they offer to the world.<sup>5</sup>

Search Institute has repeatedly found that students with sparks and the support for developing them have better results on both developmental and academic outcomes. Two of the most commonly identified sparks for students are sports and arts, yet these programs are usually among the most vulnerable when school districts must reduce costs.

Search Institute research indicates that bolstering these programs would improve students’ connections to their sparks, and in turn lead to greater school success. The following themes emerged from several studies conducted by Search Institute and its partners of over 13,000 students in grades 5 through 12:

Helping young people identify their sparks, and providing them opportunities to pursue and develop those sparks, are important additions to the more overtly “academic” steps schools take to promote students’ success.

Sparks promote healthy, positive development and contribute to psychological well-being and resilience. Students with sparks engage in fewer risk-taking behaviors, such as substance use or violence or unsafe sexual behaviors. They are less depressed, less worried, and more satisfied with their lives overall.

Young people who have deep interests and are supported by family, friends, school, and community in the development of those passions have more interpersonal communication and friend-making skills, more empathy and understanding of others’ feelings, and a better ability to work in teams.

The Dream Center Academy organizes our school “sparks” to reinforce academic and character development and also provides opportunities for students to be supported by family, friends, school, and the community. The DDCA will implement high-quality Sports and Performing Arts activities.

## School Attendance and reduce Student Suspensions

2023 data from ISRC (Iowa School Report Card) reported that minority youth comprise 56.25% of suspensions and low-income youth overall comprise 78.1% of suspensions, which a variety of research connects youth involvement in the school discipline process with involvement in the juvenile justice system.<sup>6</sup>

DDCA students will be mentored to reflect Christ-like character that leads to a Christian Worldview (Matthew 28:19-20). Gospel curriculums will be included as part of DDCA's core academic offerings. Best practice and trauma-informed SEL will also be implemented to support character development, behavior and classroom management strategies to keep students engaged, excelling academically, and reducing behaviors that lead to school suspensions.

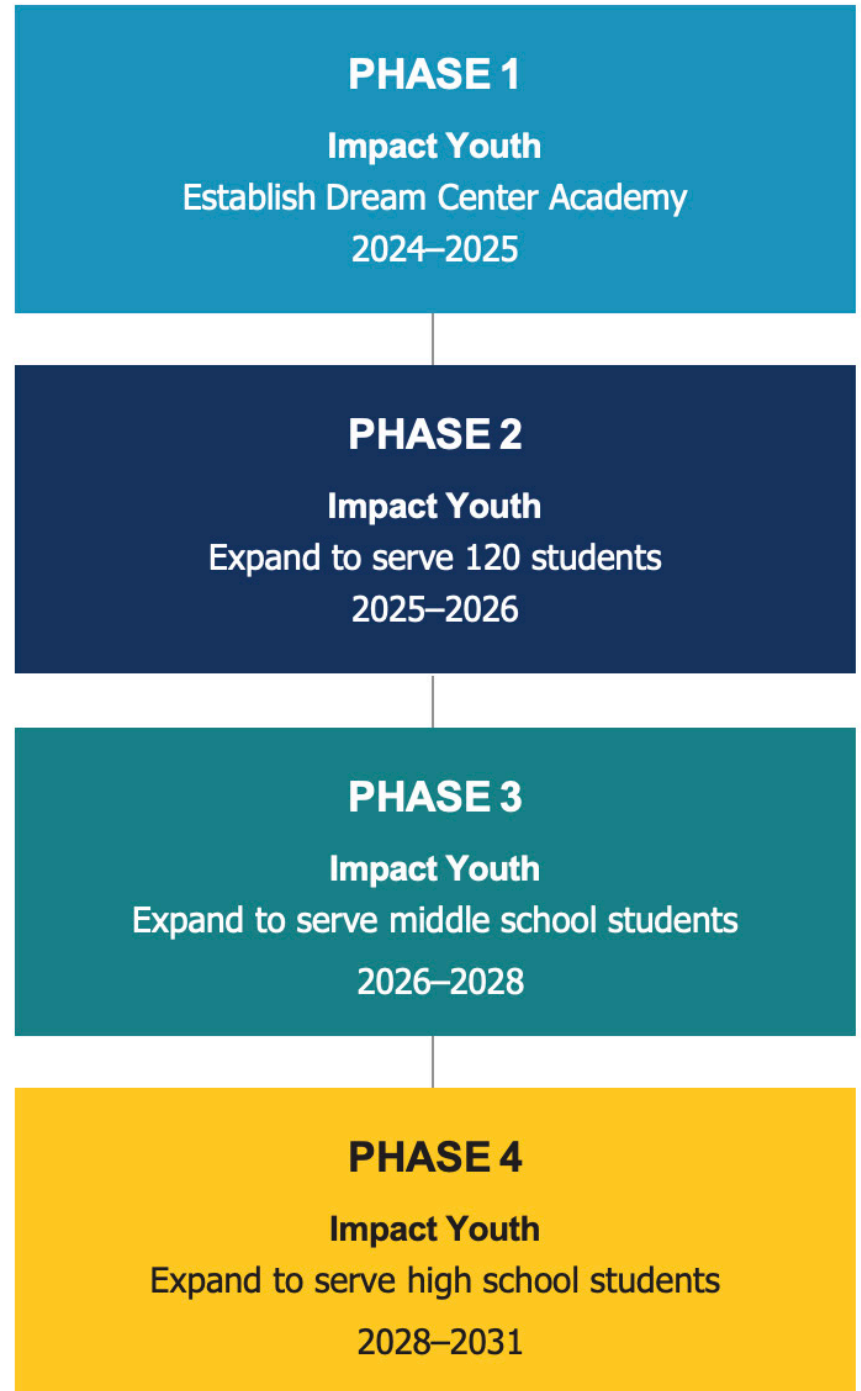
The Dubuque Dream Center Academy will also offer after-school and summer programming options to keep students active, safe, supervised, and having fun during non-school hours when youth are most at-risk of engaging in high-risk behaviors or encountering law enforcement, which can contribute to poor performance during school hours, criminal records, and cycles of generational poverty.

2023 data from ISRC reported that 68.4% of AA students have been chronically absent from public school (733 out of 1071 students). DDCA will establish a school culture and expectations that require a standard of school attendance.

# School Development Phases

## SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PHASES

The initial and primary focus of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy will be to impact youth to support families and prepare the future workforce to build and sustain the strength of our community.



# Dream Center Academy Philosophy and Model

## DREAM CENTER ACADEMY EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY AND MODEL

Many of us are aware of the traditional philosophy “**It takes a community to raise a child.**” Dr. Peter Benson has authored a research-based system that encompasses this traditional philosophy known as Search Institutes 40 Developmental Assets.<sup>7</sup>

Designed to minimize risk factors and increase protective factors while focusing on asset building rather than liability management. Search Institutes 40 Developmental Assets are divided initially into two categories, External Assets and Internal Assets. External Assets establish appropriate boundaries and connect the family, school, and neighborhood to encourage responsible behavior and also help youth use their time constructively in structured activities & programs.

**Internal Assets** focus on character development. Instilling values, increasing skills in social competencies like decision making and conflict resolution, instilling a sense of positive identity, and value in education. Coupled together, external and internal assets help young people grow into healthy adults. This system is the model of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy strategy to Impact Youth we call In Your Life Mentoring.<sup>®</sup>

**In Your Life Mentors** are Connected Caring Adults who are Unified in Purpose to build Assets in Youth designed to build strong Children. Missions can serve as a natural strategy that unify communities.

The Dream Center Academy mobilizes parents, teachers, and Dream Center School Connectors to Influence Character Development and Academic Outcomes of each Individual D.D.C.A. student.

Individual needs assessments, goal setting, and action plans are conducted for each student to determine the best action steps to influence the individual goals and outcomes for each student.

## Priority of Parent

We believe parents are the primary and most important factor in the success of their child’s education. The Dubuque Dream Center Academy in partnership with parents, educate children on the foundation of a biblical worldview, rigorous academic standards, and executive skills that prepare students for lifelong success.

## Academy Character Development

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy policies and values operate under the guidance and authority of the 66 books of the Bible as the inerrant word of God. Students will be mentored through gospel curriculums, Biblical discipleship models (Matthew 28:19-20), and best practice trauma-informed SEL strategies.

The Dream Center Academy character development and behavior management best practice model is designed to enhance behavior and classroom management that will keep students in the classroom and focused. Dream Center Academy School Connectors will focus on student retention, attendance, parent communication, and support teachers during classroom instruction.

- **Character Development Curriculums:** C.E.F. (Child Evangelism Fellowship & Discipleship), social & emotional development strategies, & Character Development curriculums instill values and address issues such as conflict and anger management, anti-bullying, hygiene, dealing with peer pressure, trauma-informed coping strategies, culturally competent topics relevant to low-income and urban communities, and establishing a school culture that creates a family and community environment and safe school climate.
- **Meal Mentoring:** School Connectors strategically engage and socialize with youth during mealtime to intentionally build relationships and reinforce values through a model called Developmental Relationships by Search Institute.

## Academic Excellence

Stanford University's Center for Research on Educational Outcomes (CREDO), released a national study in 2023 on the impact of Charter School Models on low-income and minority students. The research team calculated that charter school students gained the equivalent of an additional 16 days of learning (based on a traditional 180-day school calendar) compared to similar kids at public school districts and an additional 6-day equivalent in math. The study notes that these gains show that it is possible to achieve positive learning outcomes at scale and accelerate growth for students who have been inadequately served by traditional public school systems.

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy is established to provide students who are below reading and math proficiency best practices and focused academic support that produces additional hours of instruction to accelerate progress toward reading and math proficiency and prevent academic slides at early ages.

## Reading and Math Proficiency

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy will implement a foundational science of reading, that includes the 5 pillars of reading instruction; phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to empower the demographic we serve to read and exceed proficiency.

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy will prepare students to achieve mathematical proficiency by learning the foundational basic facts (addition, multiplication, subtraction, and division) and progress toward utilizing mathematical concepts and procedures to think critically, reason, and problem-solve. Incorporating modern technology and hands-on science curricula that align with future career opportunities will be included in the DDCA mathematics program.

A key part of DDCA effectiveness in improving student academic achievement will be the implementation of academic plans tailored to help each student reach educational goals.

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy will challenge and develop each student at their academic level and potential. Small classroom sizes, detailed evaluations, and adequate classroom instruction hours will be provided due to the design of our school model. DDCA School Connectors and volunteers will be trained in reading prescriptions and math improvement strategies to assist teachers and enhance the hours of instruction and support provided to students.

## College and Career Readiness

The D.D.C.A. will be structured to have small classroom sizes and ongoing individualized student-needs assessments to support academic outcomes and character development focus for each student. Students will be prepared for college and careers by receiving a core academic foundation in early education in the science of reading, basic math facts, technological literacy, executive skills, financial literacy, character development and trauma-informed care intertwined throughout their D.D.C.A. educational experience to assist students in development the mental health and discipline to accomplish their God designed dreams and goals. Students will receive assessments to assist in identifying strengths and interests that point toward their passions and potential career paths.

## School Attendance

School attendance is essential for the D.D.C.A. to accomplish our mission to impact and transform the lives of students. The partnership between parents and D.D.C.A. staff to promote and establish a school culture of avoiding missed school days will be a top priority and emphasis for our Academy. See School Absence and Attendance Policy on page 18.

## Sports and Performing Arts

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy will place special emphasis on establishing quality athletics, fine arts, STEM, youth & government programs to serve as additional motivators for students to excel in academics and character development.

## School Diversity

As Dubuque becomes increasingly diverse, our school model and culture will reflect the trends of community growth, provide students exposure to diversity, and healthy social interactions with diverse demographics.



## ACADEMY CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy's foundational focus is to instill in children, that all wisdom and knowledge begin with their creator (Proverbs 1:7), establish the existence of our creator, (Psalms 14:1; 53:1; Genesis 1-2), and reveal student's designed purpose to represent and glorify their creator (Isaiah 43:7).

Students will learn the reality of the fall of mankind, sin, and God's desire to reconcile mankind to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

Students will learn that representing their creator applies to all areas of their lives (Colossians 1:16; Romans 11:36), including academic excellence and character development. The DDCA will have rigorous academic standards and courses of study that prepare students to be successful in college or career fields, and character development focus intertwined in all DDCA academic and activities as part of school culture that prepares students to reflect and represent Jesus Christ as a witness to the world beyond their DDCA experience.

Biblical themes will guide our school programs and practice. Academic curriculums at DDCA will be applied to relevant careers and connections will be made to the omnipotence and omniscience of our all-powerful and knowing creator. Students will gain the perspective that our God is the creator of all things and the gifts and abilities in education, law, government, agriculture, science, technology, the arts, athletics, and more are all a result of God's ingenuity, brilliance, creativity, and design that reflect and glorify Him.

Apologetics and Christian Science will also be an integral part of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy academic curriculum so that students develop the ability to think critically and articulate intellectual facts as part of their arsenal to worship in spirit and truth.

## The Bible and Dubuque Dream Center Academy

The value and credibility of the Bible will be established at the Dubuque Dream Center Academy. Students will learn that the Bible was inspired by God and can be trusted as an infallible source God uses to communicate who He is and His plan for mankind (2 Peter 1:16-21).

Students will learn to respect the bible as a credible source of education that reveals God's design and success for their life (Genesis 1:26-28; 2 Timothy 3:14-17). All DDCA programs, policies, and practices will be established under the authority of the Bible as God's infallible word and guide for our school. DDCA will seek to establish the next generation of students who are biblically literate and transformed through God's word (Psalms 1:1-2; Romans 12:1-2).

## Statement of Faith

The basis of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the infallible and inerrant Word of God, as interpreted and expressed in the standards of the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. On this basis, the school affirms the following principles of Christian education:

**The Bible.** God, by His Holy Word, reveals Himself; renews human beings' understanding of God, of themselves, of others, and of the world; directs human beings in all their relationships and activities; and guides His people in the education of their children. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises (2 Peter 1:16-21; 2 Timothy 3:16).

**God.** We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory. (John 1:1-3; Mathew 28:19-20). As finite human beings created in God's image, we declare that it is our purpose and privilege to worship, honor, serve, and obey Him.

**Creation.** The world belongs to God, who created it and faithfully sustains it by His providence. Creation is the theater of God's glory, displaying His power and majesty. God calls us to discover creation's resources, to receive these gifts with thanksgiving and delight, and to use them wisely as stewards and caretakers who are responsible to God and to our neighbor.

**The Human Condition.** We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed (Genesis 1:26-27; 3:1-24; Romans 5:12-14).

**Sin.** Our ability to carry out our human calling to honor God, serve our neighbor, and care for the creation is marred by the corrosive effects of sin, which touch every part of life, including education. Human sin brought upon all people the curse of God, alienating them from their Creator, their neighbor, and the world, distorting their view of the true meaning and purpose of life, and misdirecting human culture. Brokenness, disease, hate, arrogance, alienation, abuse of creation, and, ultimately, death are all the inevitable fruits of sin in our world.

**Covenant.** However, God has not rejected or abandoned His world but has turned it in love. He pledges to be faithful and to care for all His children. God always keeps His promises. We acknowledge with gratitude and joy that He is our God and the God of our children, that we are His people, and that this is His world.

**Jesus Christ.** We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus-Israel's promised Messiah-was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate (Mathew 1:18-23; 1 Corinthians 15; Hebrews 1:1-4).

**The Work of Christ.** We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation (Acts 4:12; John 14:6).

**The Holy Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service (John 14:25-26; John 16:4-11).

**The Church.** We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4; Romans 12; Mathew 26:26-29; 28:19).

**Christian Living.** We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed. (Ephesians 6:10-18)

**Christ's Return.** We believe in the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission (Mathew 24; 2 Peter 3).

**Response and Eternal Destiny.** We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace (Romans 3:9-24; Luke 16:19-31; Hebrews 9:27).

**Kingdom of God.** Jesus Christ is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and He reigns over all things for our good. To be a citizen of His Kingdom is a privilege, a joy, and a responsibility. Led by the Spirit, we place our every thought, word, and deed in service of Christ's present and coming reign, and we live daily in the confident hope of the triumphant return.

**Schools.** The purpose of the Christian school is to educate children for a life of obedience to their calling in this world as image bearers of God. This calling is to know God's Word and His creation, to dedicate their lives to God, to love all people, and to be stewards in their God-given tasks, talents, and calling. The Christian school enables and equips all its children to serve the Lord, to love their fellow human beings, and to care for God's creation.

The school provides an environment of love and care with which students are nurtured. As an indispensable partner with the home and the church, the Christian school leads children to live according to biblical wisdom.

**Parents.** The primary responsibility for education rests upon parents to whom children are entrusted by God. Christian parents should accept this obligation in view of the covenantal relationship that God established with believers and their children. Parents partner with the Christian school to train up their children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6).

**Community.** Because God's covenant embraces not only parents and their children but also the entire Christian community to which they belong, and because Christian education contributes directly to the advancement of God's Kingdom, it is the obligation not only of parents but of the entire Christian community to establish and maintain Christian schools, to pray for them, to work for them, and to give generously for their support.

**Staff.** Staff members of the Christian school, living in joyful fellowship with God, model the love of Christ to children. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and dedicated to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism, Christian staff members view their work as a vocation, as a calling. The calling of a Christian staff member is to pass on the wisdom of the Christian tradition to students and to help them understand and apply the transforming power of the gospel to contemporary society and culture. In all things, they cooperate with parents, who have the ultimate responsibility for their children.

**Students.** Students are God's image bearers, entrusted to parents and the Christian community as His gifts. The Christian school encourages students to develop their gifts in response to God and in loving service to fellow human beings. Students are led to know God and to respond to Him in every dimension of the creation and in every aspect of their lives in obedient and faithful service. Christian schools must take into account the variety of abilities, needs, and responsibilities of students, and adults should view students as fellow disciples.

**Curriculum.** The Christian school curriculum is developed and organized so that children may come to know God more deeply and richly and live for Him more faithfully. Since human experience in all its rich variety is a good gift from the Creator who remains involved in His world, the Christian school curriculum explores all dimensions of creation. God’s design for the creation and His will for human society and culture must be understood and obeyed. This is the way of godly wisdom. Students are taught to recognize the brokenness that sin brings to God’s carefully designed world and are challenged to bring the healing power of Jesus Christ to a fallen world.

**Educational Freedom.** Christian schools, organized and administered in accordance with legitimate standards and provisions for schools, should be fully recognized in society as free to function according to these principles.

**Image of God.** God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God, revealed in God’s Word (Genesis 1:26-28).

**Marriage.** The term “marriage”: was designed by God as the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union. God intended for intimacy to occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other, according to God’s design, revealed in Scripture (Genesis 2:24-25).

## ORGANIZATION

### Accreditation and Membership

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy is accredited in the State of Iowa through Christian Schools International. The school participates in a school improvement/strategic planning process, with site visits occurring every five years. Results of the process are included on the school website. SCCS is also a member of Christian Schools International and the Iowa Association of Christian Schools,

### Christian Schools International

Dubuque Dream Center Academy is a member of Christian Schools International. CSI is made up of approximately 140 school units. As part of its services to member Christian schools, CSI sponsors yearly conventions, workshops, and Christian textbooks and also administers a pension and insurance plan for teachers. The school is also accredited by the State of Iowa through CSI.

### Board of Trustees

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy Board of Trustees is a body through which the Dubuque Dream Center puts its aims and purposes into practice for the youth and families we serve. It is a deliberative, policy-making body, having duties specified in the Dubuque Dream Center Academy constitution and bylaws.

The single purpose of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy Board of Trustees is to maintain and advance our Urban Christian schools.

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy Board of Trustees is responsible to God, the source of all wisdom, and will seek His divine will in all matters coming before it. The board shall govern with an emphasis on biblically-based integrity and truthfulness in all methods and practices, proactively pursue the mission, encourage expression of various points of view while seeking unity of spirit, and engage in strategic leadership while maintaining a clear distinction of board and head of school roles. Trustees shall reflect the love of Jesus Christ in all official relationships.

### School Colors

The official colors of Dream Center Academy are royal blue, gold, and black.

### Mascot

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy mascot is the Black Panther.



## Mission Directed Governance

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy School Board of Trustees Policy Manual contains all policies specifically related to the board operation.

## Non-Discrimination Statement/Harassment/Bullying Policy

Dubuque Dream Center Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at our school and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, and national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

## OPERATIONS

### Student Activities

The Dream Center Academy is designed and structured to influence student motivation towards Academic and Character Development goals and outcomes. The Dream Center Academy provides students with best practice training and development from certified instructors. Our Best-Practice Dream Center Academy program model is based on Search Institute's research and identification that students with "Sparks" and related developmental support have better results on both developmental and academic outcomes. A "spark" is defined as "an interest and/or passion young people have within them that light a fire in their lives and express the essence of who they are and what they offer to the world." The two most commonly identified sparks for 66% of more than 13,000 students surveyed nationally were sports and arts.<sup>8</sup> Spark Activities provide performance and competition opportunities that teach youth respect for authority and peers and responsibility that includes character values such as discipline. Dream Center Academy Sparks also assist students in making connections to school, community culture, academic achievement, and character development.

The Dream Center Academy will initially offer Basketball and Performing Arts structured programming, that includes Dance, Choir, and Instruments.

The Dream Center Academy's long-term goal is to expand "Sparks" offered and the student demographics served. Students are required to meet a standard of school and Dream Center Academy attendance, reduced office referrals or suspensions, and academic achievement standards to continue participation in competition or performance opportunities offered through Dream Center Academy.

### **Our Basketball Program offers the following benefits:**

- Certified Coaches
- Stages Player Development System & Prep for High School or College
- Health and Fitness Development
- Season schedule that includes Local Leagues & Tournaments
- NCAA Certified Tournaments for High-Level Players
- Player Profiles for College Recruits

### **Our Music & Performing Arts Program offers the following benefits:**

- Certified Trainers & Coaches
- Stages Artist Development System & Prep for High School or College
- School Showcases and Local Performances
- Artist Profiles for Marketable Skills & Exposure

### **Youth & Government, Bible and Debate Clubs**

The D.D.C.A. will offer education and debate clubs that provide students a foundation in political science, history, and theological education and opportunities for competition and debate.

### **STEM & Robotics Club**

The D.D.C.A. STEM & Robotics Club will provide education and opportunities in the field of science and technology, arts and design, along with presentations and competitions.

### **Classroom Devotions/Chapel**

D.D.C.A. students and our school community will gathers regularly for worship, through our classroom devotions, prayers, singing, and chapels to enrich teachers and students in their commitment to serve the Lord in our school. See our Character Development

**Transportation**

The Dream Center Academy offers transportation to children in need from school sites or home. Parents are required to fill out our transportation and needs assessment form to qualify for transportation (See Transportation Packet for more information).

- Students participating in the Dream Center Academy Activities will have after-school care options are part of the Academy structure. **(See School and After School program schedule on page 19)**

- The Dubuque Dream Center Academy offers extended after-school childcare for children of working families through DHS as a Licensed Childcare.

- The Dubuque Dream Center meets State Requirements as a Licensed Childcare Center for school-aged youth K-6th grade and serves youth year-round After School and Summer.

**STUDENTS SERVED**

- The Dubuque Dream Center Academy serves 20 students per grade. Instructing students in smaller classroom sizes at 10:1 student-to-staff ratio.
- The Dubuque Dream Center extended after-school Childcare serves students K-6th for year-round care option for working families. (See Dream Center Handbook for more information).

**Student to Staff Ratio Best Practice**

- The Dream Center seeks to apply Best Practice models to influence staff retention and student impact. This requires providing livable and competitive wages to qualified teachers/staff and low student to staff ratios for student impact.

**2024 Dubuque Dream Center Academy**

Grade	Staff	Max #
Kindergarten	Teacher/School Connector	20
1	Teacher/School Connector	20
2	Teacher/School Connector	20
3	Teacher/School Connector	20
4	Teacher/School Connector	20
5	School Connector/Coach	20
6	School Connector/Coach	20

**Dubuque Dream Center After School Program**

Grade	Staff	Max #
Kindergarten	School Connector/Coach	20
1	School Connector/Coach	20
2	School Connector/Coach	20
3	School Connector/Coach	20
4	School Connector/Coach	20
5	School Connector/Coach	20
6	School Connector/Coach	20

## ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

### Enrollment

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy follows the Iowa Code as it pertains to kindergarten enrollment. Iowa code requires that a child be at least 5 years of age by September 15 of the year he/she is to be enrolled in transitional kindergarten or kindergarten.

All parents who wish to enroll their student in grades K-8 in the school should complete the enrollment application. The head of school and/or principal is available to give school tours and orientations.

Dream Cener Academy Transitional Kindergarten Transition assessment is held in the spring and includes a school readiness screening process. A parent meeting is also scheduled in which school personnel will share a variety of information about the school and also give parents an opportunity to have their questions answered.

A special enrollment process is used to enroll students with identified special needs. Contact the head of school or principal for more information.

#### Accommodations of Special Needs

The D.D.C.A. believes in providing opportunities to everyone including children that may have some special needs requirements providing reasonable accommodations.

D.D.C.A. will require a copy or the establishment of a care plan such as IFSP or IEP to determine the needs of the child and necessary preparation. Often children will not have a diagnosed need therefore, D.D.C.A. will work closely with the child's physician, health consultant, AEA, and therapists. All policies and procedures remain the same including our policies for misconduct.

Once a care plan has been established, the plan will be written, reviewed, and updated annually or as necessary to address changes. The plan will be maintained with the child's confidential records.

### Registration

Parents are required to register their children for the new school year prior to the first day of classes. The head of school or principal will coordinate an onsite registration and orientation date and time with parents. **See registration process on page 16 & 48.**

# Admission and Registration Cont

## REGISTRATION PROCESS

### Students qualify and register for Dubuque Dream Center Academy through the following process:

- Online registration.
- Student and parent(s) attend D.D.C.A. onsite registration/orientation.
- Student/Parent completes D.D.C.A. Student Academic Profile Assessment & Questionnaire.
- According to student interest in a D.D.C.A Activity (this supports student motivation).
- Individualized student goals and outcomes are established by teacher, parent, student.
- Student fee payment source is determined and processed (ESA, STO, CCA, Student Sponsor, or parent direct pay Tuition).
- Parent agrees to Parent Partnership Pledge & Handbook.

### Enrollment & Withdrawal

As part of Orientation, parents will be given a packet of paperwork to be completed prior to enrollment. The packet includes:

- Parent Handbook of policies and procedures; and Parent Partnership Pledge
- Child/Student Safety Guide
- Character Development Guide/Expectations Handbook
- Academic Guide/Expectations Handbook
- Activity Guide/Expectations Handbook
- USDA Forms (Federal Government required information for food service)
- Physical and Immunization forms
- Fee Payment Agreement Form (Childcare Assistance or Student Sponsor form if needed)

All paperwork must be completed prior to establishing your child's first day at D.D.C.A. Periodically parents will be asked to update these forms. Failure to update the required forms by deadline could result in temporary suspension of a child's enrollment at D.D.C.A. until required forms are complete.

For a child to remain enrolled it is also expected that account balances be paid in full or requirements for ESA or Student Sponsor support complete prior to the beginning of an upcoming semester.

If a family needs assistance completing the necessary paperwork, a D.D.C.A. representation will assist or connect parents to the relevant resource for support.

D.D.C.A. prohibits discrimination against its families, employees, or applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status.

If you will be withdrawing from D.D.C.A, we ask that parents submit a 30-day written notice via email of your intended last day and set up an exit interview with the Head of School or Principal.

### Absences

We become concerned when a child does not arrive at school on time, is absent without advanced notice, or is nearing chronic absence status. Parents, please make sure that you contact your child's School Connector if your child will be absent or late due to illness, doctor appointment, vacation, or a change in your schedule.

### Early Pick Up

If a parent needs to pick up a student early from school, we request that parents attempt to inform the School Connector 1-2 days prior. This allows for Coaches and Instructors to plan for student absence and provide make up plans to student for missed instruction. If there is an unforeseen emergency, where a 1-2-day notice is not possible, contacting the School Connector or D.D.C.A. office as early as possible is appreciated.

### Late Pick Up

(charged an additional fee for additional staff needs).



## DISCHARGE POLICY

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy Character guidance policy is designed to help children become independent and caring by learning self-control, decision making skills and responsibility for their own actions. Our goal is to help children develop positive self-esteem and respect for themselves and others.

## CHRONIC DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

- The safety and welfare of all the children at our Academy are very important to us. While the staff will make every effort to work with children and their parents to promote appropriate behaviors, there are situations when additional action may become necessary.
- Initial meeting: If a child's extreme, uncontrollable behavior, continues to physically or emotionally endanger staff or other children at the Academy, a parent meeting will be requested by the Head of School/Principal, Teacher, and School Connector. The problem behavior will be discussed and recorded, and goals for correction will be established.
- Second meeting: If, after a predetermined time frame, the initial goals for changing the child's behavior fail, a second meeting will be requested by the Head of School/Principal, Teacher, and School Connector. The behavior correction goals will be discussed again, and a new behavior plan will be defined.
- Suspension/Dismissal: If no progress occurs within the established timeline, suspension will result. Parents will be responsible for payment during the length of the suspension. Dismissal of the child may if the child's behavior severely injures a staff member or another child.

## DISCHARGE POLICY

- The Dubuque Dream Center Academy reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:
  - Non-payment or excessive late payment of fees
  - Failure to submit required information or forms
  - Failure to comply with the policies of the Academy
  - Special needs of a child which we cannot adequately meet with current staffing
  - Physical or verbal abuse of staff or children by a parent or child

## ESA, FINANCIAL POLICY, and EXPECTATIONS

The Dream Center Academy is a non-public accredited school. Qualifying families are eligible to apply for Educational Savings Accounts (ESA) to cover the cost of attendance. Families are responsible for following all guidelines, instructions, and deadlines through the State of Iowa to guarantee program eligibility. For families who do not qualify for ESA Funds or miss the deadline the following guidelines and support is provided for Tuition:

## TUITION POLICIES SUMMARY

- The first month's payment for a school year must be paid at registration. A student may not be enrolled at school until the first payment has been received.
- Tuition is due on the 1st of each month, September – June (See Tuition Policy for more information).
- A \$15 late fee will be charged after the 2nd debit attempt or if tuition is paid after the 7th of the month and \$30 fee for a returned check.
- If school is not in session due to COVID or any other reason, tuition is still owed.
- Additional financial assistance may be available through our D.D.C.A. Student Sponsor program, STO Scholarships (Student Tuition Organization), or CCA (Childcare Assistance) to support extended after-school care (See Student Sponsor Policy for more information).

# School Attendance Policy

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

School attendance is essential for the D.D.C.A. to accomplish our mission to impact and transform the lives of students. The partnership between parents and D.D.C.A. staff to promote and establish a school culture of avoiding missed school days will be a top priority and emphasis for our Academy.

However, if there are unavoidable circumstances when a student will be absent, we will work together with the student and parent to make up the instruction. See below our guidelines for excused and unexcused absences:

The following are acceptable excused absences:

- Personal illness (school may require a doctor's excuse)
- Medical appointments that include a medical release from a doctor
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family or household
- Court appearance that includes prior approval or notification from the court
- Family vacation communicate prior to absence

The following will apply to unexcused absences per semester. Unexcused absences are generally absence that are not called in ahead of time by a parent or guardian. Avoidable circumstances:

- Missing the bus
- Leaving the building without approval
- Shopping
- Vacations
- Haircuts and/or other appointments pertaining to grooming
- Oversleeping

### **D.D.C.A. Attendance Procedures and Policies:**

1. All enrolled students must be in attendance full-time
2. The school shall determine daily which students enrolled in the school are absent from school and whether that absence is excused in accordance with this policy.

3. When a parent/guardian knows that their child will be absent, parents should give the school prior notice of the upcoming absence. When it is necessary for a student to be absent due to illness or emergency reasons, a parent/guardian is requested to call the D.D.C.A. main office at 563.845.7591 or email [academyinfo@dbqdream.org](mailto:academyinfo@dbqdream.org) before 8:30 AM on the day of the absence to indicate the reason for the student's absence so that the school can maintain accurate records. Please call the main office in advance when you have a planned absence.

4. Students with an absence have the obligation to obtain assignments and understand, retain for future reference, and use all materials presented during their absence. Make-up work must be completed within the same number of days absent.

5. Students who arrive late to school must report to the office upon arrival at school.

6. Students must be in class and on time or excused in order to practice or participate in an activity that same evening.

7. Credit will be given for classwork completed during an excused or unexcused absence. All students with an absence will be permitted to make up an examination missed during an absence.

8. Teachers are required by law to take daily attendance, maintain a record of absences, and inform the main office of absentees.

9. Teacher(s) are not obligated to remind students of make-up work and need not give credit for overdue work.

10. Teacher will keep records of tardies. Tardiness will be recorded on the student's permanent record.

### **Students Leaving School**

Students who need to leave school during the day should have a note from their parent and/or guardian before being allowed to do so. Before leaving, the student must check out at the office. Upon returning, the student must check back in at the office.

### **DDCA Procedure for Dealing with Unexcused Absences:**

1. For five (5) absences whether unexcused or excused, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents/guardians stating DDCA policy and that future occurrences will result in head of school involvement.
2. For seven (7) absences whether unexcused or excused, the matter will be brought to the head of school. This head of school will determine what actions will be taken with parents or if habitual truancy needs to be filed with the appropriate county officials.
3. For any subsequent unexcused and excused absences that occur, habitual truancy may be filed with the appropriate county officials. A consequence for habitual truancy is at the discretion of the appropriate county court.
4. Truant students will be dealt with according to legal procedures and the laws of Iowa.
5. More than ten (10) absences whether unexcused or excused may result in a child failing a particular course or grade level. This decision will be made by the head of school.

# School Lunch-Dream Center Academy Schedule and School Structure

## School Lunch

School lunch is available for all students. Free and reduced-price lunches are also available for all who qualify for such assistance. Information regarding cost of lunch tickets and application for free and reduced lunch tickets is available at registration. For those who choose to bring a lunch from home, milk is available. Fast food is not allowed to be brought into the lunchroom.

## DREAM CENTER ACADEMY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

### School Year

#### Teachers

- Day begins: 8:00 a.m. Monday-Friday
- Day ends: 3:15 p.m. Monday-Friday

#### K-6th Grade:

- Enter building: 8:30 a.m. Monday-Friday
- Breakfast: 8:30-8:45 a.m. Monday-Friday
- Day begins: 8:45 a.m. Monday-Friday
- Devotions/Chapel: 8:45-9:00 a.m. Monday-Thurs
- Classroom Instruction: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Lunch: 12:00-12:40 p.m. Monday-Friday
- Recess: 12:30-1:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
- Day ends: 3:00 p.m. – Monday-Friday
- After School Programs: 3:00–5:30 P.M.

### Summer

#### Monday–Friday:

- 9:00 A.M.–4:30 P.M.

\*Before School and early drop off summer options are designated for parents in need. Q & A forms are provided during student registration and intake process to determine families that qualify for this option. There is an additional fee for this option.

### Late Pick Up

An additional fee is also charged for late pick-up needs for additional staff cost.

## ACADEMY SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Dubuque Dream Center Academy is structured to educate students to meet Iowa State Academic requirements.

The Dream Center Academy provides certified teachers and para’s titled School Connectors to implement our curriculums and structure.

The Dream Center Academy low student to staff ratio and small classroom structure will allow D.D.C.A. to provide students with more hours of classroom instruction, developmental relationships that support character development, high level activity development, and overall preparation for college, career, and life.

### Holidays

#### The Dubuque Dream Center Academy is closed:

- New Year’s Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (closed all week)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- The day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- MLK Day

### Facility

Dubuque Dream Center Facility Structures are school structures designed to serve the academic, meal, and activity model of a traditional school.

This includes classrooms designed to implement Academic Curriculums to prepare our students for High School graduation and College. Includes **Technology room and Library.**

Our **Cafeteria and Food Service Center** is designed to serve meals to students each day during school, after school, and summer. Breakfast, lunch, and supper. Our activity spaces include our **Gymnasium** for sports training and fun activities, our **Dance, Choir, Production, and Instrument rooms** for performing arts training.



## DREAM CENTER ACADEMY BENEFIT HIGHLIGHTS

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy is designed to prepare the next generation to be Disciples of Jesus Christ who are men and women of character who impact their families and communities, display excellence in education, are prepared for college or career, and who receive high level training in activities that provide students a social outlet in which students have or develop a passion to learn life lessons and provide motivation towards character development and academic achievement. Below are highlight of the benefits of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy for students:

- Christ-Centered Education and Character Development
- Low Teacher to Student Ratio for additional classroom instruction and Academic Impact
- Ongoing student assessment, determining best practice student learning style, tailored academic instruction, and Individualize Academic Goals for best practice preparation for college and career path.
- Trained Youth Development In Your Life Mentors/School Connectors to support academic, character development, and academy success.
- Development in Specialized Spark Activity by Certified Coaches in early elementary ages
- Transportation
- Quality & Affordable Afterschool & Summer Care for children of working parents
- Keeping kids active and productive year-round
- School Activity Schedule that includes School sports season, Local Leagues and Tournaments
- Local Performances & Showcases
- Fitness foundation and healthy meals

- Positive Peer Friendship Focus and School Culture that influences character development

- School Diversity

## Connection to family support services

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy is an extension of our original Dubuque Dream Center Mission of Impacting Youth, Strengthening Families and Building Community.

The Dubuque Dream Center has family support services that families can be referred to during the orientation of the Dream Center Academy, through an intake process. As families are strengthened, youth are further impacted.

Families can be connected to services that provide GED, Adult Literacy, Computer Training, job and career training, food assistance, shelter, clothing, or other human needs assistance. These services and resources are not all provided by the Dream Center or the Academy, but the D.D.C.A. will serve as a Connector to assist and direct families to the organizations or resources that meet their immediate and primary needs.

## Academic Curriculum and Dream Center Academy

Dubuque Dream Center Academy Students will receive the dual impact of being trained according to the Iowa Core Curriculum academic standards and the application of education to the existence of their Creator.

Students will learn that representing their creator applies to all areas of their lives (Colossians 1:16; Romans 11:36), including academic excellence and character development. The D.D.C.A. will have rigorous academic standards and courses of study that prepare students to be successful in college or career fields, and character development focus intertwined in all D.D.C.A. academic and activities as part of school culture that prepares students to reflect and represent Jesus Christ as a witness to the world beyond their D.D.C.A. experience (See D.D.C.A. Academic Curriculum Manual).

# Dream Center Academy Staff and School Connectors

## DUBUQUE DREAM CENTER ACADEMY STAFF

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy is committed as an essential function and focus of our organization to recruit, retain, and train Quality and Qualified Teachers and Staff to enhance student impact. This page provides a summary of the core Direct Service staff hired as the initial D.D.C.A. educators.

### Teachers

Dream Center Academy Teachers are state licensed teachers with a degree in education. Teachers have endorsements for specific grade levels and subjects. The D.D.C.A. seeks to recruit teachers who are mission-driven and passionate about progressing our students toward reading and math proficiency and pushing students to achieve high academic standards. See the D.D.C.A. teaching standards policy for information on our teacher profile.

### School Connectors

The Dubuque Dream Center staff called School Connectors are teacher and parent support staff responsible for overseeing student academic, activity, and character development outcomes.

### Enrollment Director

The D.D.C.A. Enrollment Director partners with the Head of School or Principal to recruit and retain students and parents who are a good fit for the Dream Center Academy.

### School Counselor

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy provides a School Counselor who receives ongoing training social-emotional development strategies, mental health first aid, trauma informed best practices to support students with high ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences), and connects our students with additional mental health and therapy resources for proper diagnosis and serves. Students are referred to the counselor by parents, teachers, school connectors or self-referrals. These referrals must be made before counseling is implemented.

### Kitchen Manager

The Dream Center Academy Kitchen Manager has extensive experience in professional food service and kitchen Code Requirements. The D.D.C.A. Kitchen Manager oversees the USDA Grant and Healthy Meal Plan Requirements. Our Food Service and Kitchen Manager is essential to the success of student impact.

### Head of School

The role of the head of school and principal in responsibility and discipline is to guide faculty, staff, and students in their efforts to achieve the school's mission. The head of school and principal will provide assistance to faculty and staff in implementing the classroom management and school-wide management procedures. In this capacity, the head of school and principal will provide training and continued support to faculty and staff as they strive to teach students to follow the guidelines.

The head of school and principal will assist faculty and staff with severe misbehavior such as physically dangerous situations, illegal acts, insubordination, and any chronic or recurring problems. As needed on a case-by-case basis, the head of school and principal will initiate interventions, recovery spaces, parental communication/meetings, alternate learning environments, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, contacting the appropriate authorities, or other severe consequences, such as expulsion.

### Business Manager

The D.D.C.A. Business Manager stays up-to-date with ESA and support funding to assist the Academy and families in accessing the funding for our school, and provides marketing updates for D.D.C.A. partners, parents, and community.

### Facilities Manager

The Dream Center Facilities Manager provides organization and oversight for the quality and safety guidelines of our school facilities. (Check our website for additional staff information)

## SCHOOL CONNECTORS

Dubuque Dream Center Academy staff called School Connectors are essential and contribute to the uniqueness of the Dubuque Dream Center Academy Impact Model.

Dream Center Academy School Connectors meet qualifications of traditional school Paraprofessionals, who support teachers to assist students to receive required academic instruction in the classroom so that students can accomplish academic outcomes and development.

In addition, D.D.C.A. School Connectors are mentors, coaches, and academic support staff who are trained to support students who are below reading or math proficiency and have high ACES (Adverse Childhood experiences).

As mentors, School Connectors are trained and committed to what the D.D.C.A. calls **In Your Life Mentoring**, who intentionally develop relationships to establish trust and a caring connection to instill values, provide support, and develop Disciples of Jesus Christ.

As coaches, School Connectors develop students in activities in which students are passionate or develop a passion to keep student active, connected to positive peer influences, and can be used to motivated students towards academic and character development outcomes.

Each School Connector is responsible for a Team. A Team is a Sports Team or Music and Performing Arts Team such as a Dance Team or Choir. Our goal is to have a 1:10 ratio of School Connector per students for quality impact.

As an academic support staff, School Connectors support teachers to assist students to receive required academic instruction in the classroom so that students can accomplish academic outcomes and development.

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy has full-time and part-time School Connectors.

Full-time School Connectors oversee Dream Center Academy activities, support students to accomplish academic instruction requirements, supervise students during lunch, recess, and activities and incorporate and influence Christ-centered character development relationship building, activity coaching, and academic support.

Part-time School Connectors work after school during the school year and full day during the summer.

### D.D.C.A. School Connector Profile

- Character and values consistent with D.D.C.A. Christian/Christ-Centered mission and statement of faith.
- Education and professional background in field of Youth Development
- Passion for Child and Youth Development
- Professional history of responsibly, punctuality, and work ethic
- Organizational skills
- Contributes to positive workplace environment
- Willingness to grow professionally and utilize D.D.C.A. Model to impact and development youth
- Passion, background, and experience in a D.D.C.A. Activity

## Measurable Outcomes

In partnership with the State of Iowa, the Dubuque Dream Center Academy will implement testing and measuring standards in line with the State of Iowa measuring tools and expectations in areas that include English-Language Arts (includes reading and writing), Mathematics, Sciences, Social-emotional learning, and College, and Career Readiness.

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy mission and model is designed to support an identified low-income and minority demographic of students who locally, in our state, and nationally have the lowest academic outcomes in reading and math proficiency. Our Academy is established to transform these trends that lead to generational poverty.

The D.D.C.A. welcome accountability to state measure, outcomes, and expectations, including our own high academic expectations and outcomes in our passion to impact the students we serve.

## DUBUQUE DREAM CENTER ACADEMY MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

### Long Term Outcomes: 7-10 years

- All D.D.C.A. Students demonstrate Social and Emotional skills that prepare them for Academic and Career Success
- All D.D.C.A. Students Graduate from High School
- All D.D.C.A. High School Graduates demonstrate College or Career Readiness
- All DDCA Students Reflect Character as a Disciple of Jesus Christ
- All DDCA Students Demonstrate Biblical Literacy and a foundation of Biblical Apologetics

### Midterm Outcomes: 4-7 years

- 70 % or more of D.D.C.A. students are AT Reading Proficiency by 4th Grade
- 70% or more of D.D.C.A. students AT Reading Proficiency by High School Graduation
- 70% or more of D.D.C.A. students AT MATH Proficiency by High School Graduation

### Dubuque Dream Center Academy Student Outcome Indicators

70% or more of D.D.C.A. students are PROGRESSING towards Reading Proficiency by end School Year and meet growth target.

- 70% or more of DC students PROGRESSING towards Math Proficiency by end School Year and meet growth target.
- 70% or more of students receiving 9 or less absences from school
- 70% or more of students receiving 0 school suspensions
- 70% or more of students meeting school office referral requirement
- 70% or more of students receiving 3.0 GPA or above (MS Only)

# Character Development & Behavior Management Strategies

## D.D.C.A. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

2023 data from ISRC (Iowa School Report Card) reported that minority youth comprise 56.25% of suspensions and low-income youth overall comprise 78.1% of suspensions, which a variety of research connects youth involvement in the school discipline process with involvement in the juvenile justice system.

The Dubuque Dream Center Academy is committed to instilling Character in the students we serve to reduce the trend and stigma of low-income and minority students receiving suspensions, office referrals, engagement with law-enforcement, and high levels of disciplinary actions that keep students out of the classroom, impacting student instruction and academic progression.

DDCA students will be mentored to reflect Christ-like character that leads to a Christian Worldview (Matthew 28:19-20). Gospel curriculums will be included as part of DDCA's core academic offerings. Best practice and trauma-informed SEL will also be implemented to support character development, behavior and classroom management strategies to keep students engaged, excelling academically, and reducing behaviors that lead to school suspensions.

- The D.D.C.A. foundational strategy for managing the behavior of students we serve is focusing on **Developmental Relationships** to influence character development. As In Your Life Mentors, our School Connectors will intentionally develop relationships to establish trust and a caring connection to instill values, provide support, and develop Disciples of Jesus Christ.
- D.D.C.A. will continue character development which reduces behaviors that lead to suspensions or high risk negative behavior by implementing, **Character Development Curriculums**, that includes biblical studies, devotions, and SEL (Social-Emotional Learning).

• However, in the event D.D.C.A. School Connectors, Teachers, or Staff need to utilize **Behavior Management Strategies**, our D.D.C.A. Staff are training in Department of Education Behavior Management Strategies designed to deescalate highly emotional student outburst and maintain a safe culture and environment for all students, staff, and volunteers.

• **R & R's and Respect Reminders** are the D.D.C.A. Motto to assist in student Behavior Management, rewards, and consequences. Respect, Responsibility, and Represent are what we seek to instill and Remind all students as representatives of the D.D.C.A. Our School-Wide Behavior Plan will be established and communicated under the 3 Behavior Expectations of Respect, Responsibility, and Represent.

• As students demonstrate respect and responsibility students are rewarded with what we call **Dream Center Bucks**. D.C. Bucks are not actual or real money. D.C. Bucks are tied to a rewards and point system where student can earn virtual "Bucks" or points that can be accumulated towards earning prizes, snacks, or awards at the end of each semester.

• Participation and **Playing Time** through our School Sports and **Performance Opportunities** through our Performing Arts activities are another strategy coaches utilize to reward and hold students accountable to our D.D.C.A. academic and character development expectations.

• **End of Year Awards** are provided to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of our D.D.C.A. students, staff, volunteers, and parents. Awards can also serve as a motivation for students to meet Academic and Character Development Expectations. Each student that meets attendance expectations will minimally receive a participation award. We will conduct our annual End of Year Award Ceremony, in June.

*(See our D.D.C.A. Character Development and Behavior Management Guide Policies for more information)*



# Family/DDCA Staff Relationships

## FAMILY/D.D.C.A. RELATIONSHIP

Healthy and positive relationships between D.D.C.A. staff and parents are a top priority and intentional focus for the D.D.C.A.

The D.D.C.A. encourages parents to contact their child's School Connector or D.D.C.A. Administrators regarding any suggestions, concerns, or support needed.

The D.D.C.A. has established a Parent Focus Group to provide a formal and organized platform for parents to be informed, provide suggestions, address concerns, and support the growth and development of the D.D.C.A. All parents are welcome to join the Parent Focus Group or attend the meetings.

There is a reciprocal responsibility of the family and caregivers to observe, participate and be trained in the care that each child requires. Involved, non-custodial parents have access to the same developmental and behavioral information given to the custodial parent, if they have joint legal custody, permission by court order, or written consent from the custodial parent. Caregivers should informally share with the family information about their child's needs and activities. Children's experience in School will be most beneficial when parents and caregivers develop mutual respect and trust.

A family enrolling a child with special needs will need to provide the School with a copy of the child's Individual Family Service Plan to assist the School, Teachers, and School Connectors.

If a parent or guardian has a concern, they should contact their child's School Connector, Principal, or Head of School to set up a meeting.

Situations that can't be addressed by a School Connector or Teacher such as tuition questions will require a meeting with our Enrollment Director or Business Manager.

For Assistance with all other concerns or questions regarding the D.D.C.A., parents should contact the School Administrative Office to be directed to the relevant Administrator or Staff. Parents can also contact a D.D.C.A. Administrator via email from our D.D.C.A. website.

## Parent Code of Conduct

- Parents or designated pick up persons are expected to be respectful to our staff and children.
- Matters that are not resolved by School Connectors must be addressed to the Head of School or Principal
- Shouting is not allowed.
- Profanity is not allowed.
- Persons shouting, using profanity, or engaged in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave and may be dismissed from our center. This may result in the dismissal of a child from the program.
- Parents should conduct themselves appropriately at activity competitions or performances

*(See Activity Policies for more information).*

*Violation of the parent code of conduct may result in termination of care with no notice.*

## Parent Visits

Parents may visit their child at the D.D.C.A. at any time. We have an "open door" policy, which means parents are encouraged to drop in anytime during our hours of operation.

However, if your child is in their Activity Station or testing during a parent visit, we ask that parents wait outside the activity area or classroom until activity is complete to avoid instruction disruption during training or instruction.

When parental contact is prohibited, the parent that has custody of the child must provide D.D.C.A. with a written court order documenting the restriction.

# Family/DDCA Staff Relationships Cont-Communication

If the restricted parent would arrive at our school, the court order would allow us to receive police intervention while asking that parent to leave.

If no court order is on file at D.D.C.A., then we can inform the custodial parent that the restricted person is at D.D.C.A., however we cannot physically stop the person from taking the child.

## Communication

D.D.C.A. uses the following forms of communication:

### D.D.C.A. Website

- All D.D.C.A. Parents will receive monthly updates on our D.D.C.A. website that will provide information and updates regarding academic and testing information, general information, activity schedules and upcoming events.

### Emails

- D.D.C.A. School Connectors and Administrative Staff will provide email updates to parents with reminders and highlights as needed.
- D.D.C.A. utilizes an electronic communication tool that requires an email address of each parent that would like to receive email communication regarding D.D.C.A. special events and organization information.

### Letters and Flyers

- Letters and/or flyers will be provided to D.D.C.A. students to take home to parents regarding:
  - School registrations
  - Special events and activities
  - Important updates and information
  - Upcoming Awards Ceremonies
  - Parent/Teacher Conferences

### Text

- D.D.C.A. utilizes a text alert system. The system may be used to alert parents to cancellation of activities and emergencies. Please submit your cell phone carrier (Verizon, US Cellular, etc.) and cell phone number to participate in this system.

### Phone Calls

- Phone calls are encouraged if parents have questions or want additional information on how your child is doing.

### Direct Mailing

- Direct mailing may be utilized as an extra step to ensure families get important information or forms related to the following:
  - Session registrations
  - Special events and activities
  - Important updates and information
  - Upcoming Awards Ceremonies

### Facebook

- The Dubuque Dream Center Academy has a private invite Facebook page for parents to receive information and updates:
  - Session registrations
  - Special events and activities
  - Important updates and information
  - Upcoming Awards Ceremonies

# Student Safety Policies

## STUDENT SAFETY POLICIES

The D.D.C.A. takes the safety of your children seriously and as a top priority in our School.

### **The Following are D.D.C.A. Safety Policy Highlights:**

- We maintain low student to adult ratios at all times.
- Whenever possible, more than one adult is present in a classroom or activity with students.
- Employees meet state mandated training requirements including First Aid and CPR, Mandatory Reporting of Child and Dependent Adult Abuse, and Universal Precautions.
- Tornado, Fire, additional safety drills recommended by Homeland Security and the State Fire Marshall's office are conducted each session.
- Indirect care employees move throughout the building and are available to assist with students at any time.
- Bathroom and Supervision policies and guidelines are designed and instructed to
- These precautions are designed to reduce the risk of inappropriate student behavior, a student wandering off or ending up missing for any reason.
- Adults are instructed not to utilize the bathrooms at the same time as children for proper privacy and safety of all children.
- Annually Administration review our Student Safety Policies to understand all the systems and safety precautions the D.D.C.A. has in place and annually assess and update as needed to keep your child safe.

*(See additional D.D.C.A. child safety policies for more information)*

## Supervision

- D.D.C.A. School Connectors directly supervise students by sight and sound at all times.
- D.D.C.A. staff should not supervise or instruct any student of any age without another adult volunteer or staff present.
- If supervision or instruction is done in view of our D.D.C.A. camera's, D.D.C.A. staff or volunteers may supervise or instruct a student for the designated time authorized by a Supervisor.

### **Active and positive supervision involves:**

- Knowing student attendance at each station
- Knowing each child's abilities and tendencies
- Establishing clear and simple safety rules
- Being aware of potential safety hazards
- Standing in a strategic position
- Scanning play activities and circulating
- Focusing on the positive rather than the negative to teach a child what is safe for the child and other children.

# Student Safety Policies Cont

## Missing Student

- If a student is noticed to be missing, the D.D.C.A. School Connector will ask for the support of other Staff or Administrators to find the child
- Administrators and Staff will conduct an extensive search of the facility or designated areas that include classrooms, offices, bathrooms, dining areas or other designated areas if the search
- After an extensive search is complete, and the child is not found, the parents and police will be notified. Involves an offsite field trip, activity, or event. The Director will notify the DHS Childcare Licensing Consultant that a child is missing.

A DHS and possible Law Enforcement investigation, the circumstances, and the safety level of the child when s/he was found will determine what future actions will be taken as it relates to the D.D.C. Organization and Staff involved.

## Offsite Field Trips

- D.D.C.A. students will be permitted to participate in offsite activities with written approval by a parent.
- D.D.C.A. School Connectors will regularly count students on a scheduled basis, at every transition, and whenever leaving one area and arriving at another, to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.
- Appropriate adult to child ratios will be met during all hours of operation, including onsite and offsite activities, and field trips, following precautions for specific areas and equipment.

## Offsite Contact

“OUTSIDE CONTACT” is defined as any type of ongoing contact outside of the Dream Center Academy between Staff/Volunteer and youth (individually or in small groups).

This includes any type of direct contact between 1 Staff/Volunteer and 1 youth (“1-1 Contact”).

- Staff/Volunteers should NOT exchange ANY personal contact information with ANY youth unless they have gone through our D.D.C.A. Screening and Contact process.
- Only Screened Volunteers and D.C. Staff/Interns are allowed to go through this process to have Outside Contact with youth.
- In order for a Staff/Volunteer to have any Outside Contact with a youth (visits, phone calls, emails, letters, online chats, text messaging, etc.), they must:
- Get the approval of their D.D.C.A. Head of School or Principal.
- The D.D.C.A. Head of School or Principal will get the specific written permission from the student’s parent.
- This permission slip must give detailed Contact Specifications that the parent is agreeing to permit between this Staff / Volunteer and their child.
- The D.D.C.A. Head of School or Principal will also inform the parent of who they should contact if they become concerned about any of the communication between their child and the Staff/Volunteer.
- The Staff/Volunteer’s Supervisor needs to keep this permission slip in the appropriate file at the D.D.C.A. (the original in the students file and a copy with the Staff/Volunteer’s file).

## Non-School Activities

If a D.D.C.A. student needs to leave the school for an activity at another location (e.g., doctor appointments, and other reasons)

## Student Safety Policies Cont

a permission form will need to be completed by the parent indicating who will be transporting/supervising the activity, if it is not a parent or guardian, and the time frame that the child will be away from the school.

Our School will not assume responsibility for the child once they leave our care. Upon return to our School a child must be signed in and taken to his or her Station at which point we will resume responsibility for the child.

### Under the influence

When a parent or authorized person arrives at D.D.C.A. to pick up a child and is obviously under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the employee must immediately notify the Head of School or Principal.

The Head of School or Principal will inform the person that they do not seem to be in a condition to care for the child and an alternate person will be contacted. If the individual takes the child anyway the Head of School or Principal will remind the person that they could be arrested for child endangerment if they take the child. The police will be called to report that an intoxicated person has left our school with a child. We will give them a description of the vehicle, the license plate number, the direction they went and the address of the child's residence. Parent(s) will also be notified.

### Release of Children

D.D.C.A. uses the following procedure to prevent children from leaving the school with unauthorized persons:

When a child is enrolled at D.D.C.A., a registration card must be completed. This form lists at least two local people, other than the parent(s), who has permission to pick up the child. No other person(s) will be allowed to pick up a child unless written or verbal permission is given. Parent(s) may add or remove names from this list at any time.

*NOTE: Children will not be allowed to leave the school with someone who is under the age of 14.*

If a child will be picked up by someone listed on the registration card, D.D.C.A. would like to be notified verbally or in writing as to who will be coming but the

child will be released to anyone listed on this form even without prior notification.

When someone arrives at D.D.C.A. to pick up a child, a teacher or administrator may ask for a photo I.D., if person identifies themselves as someone listed on the registration card but is not recognized by D.D.C.A. staff. If the photo ID verifies the name of someone listed on the registration card, then the child will be released to that person.

If someone arrives at D.D.C.A. to pick up a child and they are not listed on the registration card, and D.D.C.A. has not been notified verbally or in writing that this person is to be picking up the child, the child will not be released until permission can be obtained and identification can be verified.

As D.D.C.A. employees get to know and recognize family members and friends, those individuals will not always be required to show a photo ID. They should however always be prepared to show a photo ID in the event that a new employee does not recognize them. Employees are always encouraged to ask for photo identification from anyone picking up a child that the employee does not recognize. That may at times include parents.

### Pick up/drop off Procedure

- Without exception, everyone who enters and exits the facility must use the sign-in/sign-out procedure. The authorized person will enter their identification number in the computer and check the child in/out when entering the building.
- The computer will document the initials of the authorized person and time in and out of the facility.
- Individuals authorized to take a student who is in the D.D.C.A. facility out of the facility's supervision are listed in the child's file along with that person's contact information, and relationship to the child.
- No child will be released to anyone who is not positively identified by the staff who is supervising the child.



## Access to Children

Only persons who have been granted access to D.D.C.A. secure building are permitted to move about the building without an escort. This may include all employees, authorized pick-up persons, authorized professionals who are working directly with specific children and some vendors. Anyone else will be escorted through the facility by a D.D.C.A. staff member. All adults, including parents and authorized pick-up persons, are monitored by D.D.C.A. staff. Children are supervised by sight and sound at all times by a D.D.C.A. staff.

## Visitor Access

One of our primary goals is to provide a safe learning environment for all our students. Our school does not allow any person into the D.D.C.A. facility that is not a staff member or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with D.D.C.A. students to have “unrestricted access” to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian. “Unrestricted access” means that a person has contact with a student or is directly responsible for D.D.C.A. student programming.

Staff members will limit to the best of their knowledge and ability the people allowed on the property when children are present. It will be limited to authorized persons who include D.D.C.A. employees, volunteers, and parents/custodians of the children enrolled. Any other person on the property will be closely supervised and monitored by one or more of the authorized persons depending upon the reason the person is on the property.

“Supervision” will require one or more staff members to remain with the person at all times and “monitoring” will entail watching what the person is doing and controlling their access to the area where the children are present. Head of School will be responsible for the supervising and monitoring unless another staff member is requested by the Head of School to fulfill this responsibility. If there is a conflict of interest the Head of School or an authorized D.D.C.A. staff member will fulfill this responsibility.

Any persons who are listed on the sex offender registry shall only have access with written permission from the director relating to their own minor child coming to and leaving the D.D.C.A. They will only be allowed to enter the building by buzzing at the entry door. They must stop by the office to obtain assistance from the director or administrative assistant to take their child to a station or locate their child and will remain at the center only for the time reasonably necessary to drop off and/or pick up their own minor child with supervision.

## Mandatory Reporter

Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation, the D.D.C.A will report to the Department of Human Services, as required by state and local laws, of any instance where there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse, neglect, or exploitation may have occurred. Failure to report any suspected case of abuse could result in revocation of D.D.C.A.’s accreditation, immediate termination or suspension of employment and/or individuals could be criminally charged for failing to report.

D.D.C.A. employees must participate in two hours of training on mandatory reporting of child and dependent adult abuse within the first six months of employment and every five years thereafter to comply with licensing requirements.

Section 232.70 of the Iowa Code requires that each report made by a mandatory reporter, as defined in Section 232.69, shall be made both orally and in writing. The oral report must be made by telephone or otherwise to the Department of Human Services. If the person making the report has reason to believe that immediate protection of the child is advisable, that person shall also make an oral report to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

The written report must be made to the Department of Human Services within 48 hours after the oral report.

By law, the oral and written reports shall contain the following information, or as much thereof as the person making the report is able to furnish: a. the names and home address of the child and his parents or other persons believe to be responsible for his care; b. the child's present whereabouts if not the same as the parent's or other person's home address; c. the child's age; d. the nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries; e. the name, age and condition of other children in the same home; f. any other information which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury to the child, the identity of the person or persons responsible for the injury, or in providing assistance to the child; and g. the name and address of the person making the report.

### Legal sanctions for failure to report are as follows:

Any mandatory reporter who knowingly and willfully fails to report a suspected case of child abuse is guilty of a simple misdemeanor. 2. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly fails to report is civilly liable for damages proximately caused by such failure (Legal Reference 232.75). Any mandatory reporter who, in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or participates in the investigation of a child abuse has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal. Records and/or information pertaining to the abuse may be released to the child abuse investigator without release required in other situation (Legal Reference 232.73).

Dear parents: The people who care for your child have a special status under the law. They're mandatory reporters. They don't really report "child abuse". What they must report is their suspicion that someone may have purposely hurt your child. They have no choice under the law. Trained investigators decide whether or not abuse actually took place. All children get bumps, bruises and scrapes as a part of growing up. It is important however that you tell your child's teacher/coach about any unusual injuries or conditions.  
Sincerely, Child Care Consultant

*To Report Child Abuse Anytime, Call: TOLL FREE STATEWIDE (1-800-362-2178). You may call collect.*

### What is child abuse and neglect?

- Physical abuse (Legal definition – Iowa Code 232.68 (21)) - “any non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of it, suffered by a child as a result of the acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of the child.”
- Possible Indicators – frequent injuries explained as “accidents,” unusual bruises, welts, burns, fractures, or bite marks.
- Sexual Abuse (Legal definition – Iowa Code 232.68 (2d)) – “commission of any sexual offense with or to a child as defined by Chapter 709, Section 726.2, or section 728.12, Subsection 1, as a result of the acts or omissions of the person responsible for the care of the child.” Abuse acts include anal, oral, or genital intercourse; fondling private parts; and indecent exposure. Also, any acts or omissions which allow, permit or encourage the child to engage in child prostitution or pornography.

### Possible Indicators

- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
  - Experiences pain or itching in genital area
  - Has venereal disease
  - Cluster of behaviors, including: poor relationship with other children, appears withdrawn, engages in delinquent acts, or runs away
  - Denial of Critical Care (Legal definition – 232.68 (2c)) – “failure on the part of a person responsible for the care of a child to provide for the adequate food, shelter, clothing or other care necessary for the child's health and welfare when financially able to do so or when offered financial or other reasonable means to do so.”
- Possible Indicators – (Occurring in patterns)
- Child is often not clean, is tired, has no energy
  - Clothes are dirty or wrong for the weather
  - Comes to school without breakfast, no lunch money
  - Seems to be alone too often
  - Child may be demanding or unusually shy; behind developmentally for his/her age in physical, emotional or intellectual development
  - Children left alone, and not old enough to handle this responsibility

## **Abuse Allegations against an Employee**

If an employee is being investigated for an abuse allegation by DHS, D.D.C.A. administration will take the following steps:

- Cooperate with and review the allegation statements with the DHS investigator;
- Take action concerning the employee's work status. The specific action will depend on the individual situation but will likely fall within one of the following options:
  - The employee may continue working during the allegation investigation, with or without modifications to job duties/responsibilities.
  - The employee could be suspended with pay until the investigation is complete.
  - The employee could be suspended without pay until the investigation is complete.

**(See School Policies document for additional Student Safety Policies)**

## HEALTH/MEDICATION

The enrollment packet contains all the health forms that D.D.C.A. requires and is kept in each individual child's confidential file. Parents are responsible for reporting to D.D.C.A. any changes to these health forms when they occur. Parents update forms annually.

### The packet includes:

- Names, phone numbers, and addresses of the child's physician and dentist.
- Name of the local hospital the child should be taken to in the event of an emergency.
- Consent to obtain emergency medical care, along with current insurance information.
- A current physical record or health assessment
- A current immunization record that meets Iowa's immunization laws for childcare documented on an Iowa Immunization Certificate is required for all children in our care including Hepatitis B. Parents must update their child's immunizations in our records as the child receives them.
- D.D.C.A. requires that each child have a routine physical at least annually by the child's healthcare provider that includes the administration of required immunizations.
- Upon enrollment or diagnosis, children who have special health care needs such as food allergies, seizures, or asthma must have an emergency action plan completed by their healthcare provider on file. The action plan will be updated at least annually.

### Admission & Exclusion from school due to illness

Criteria for Excluding Children Who Are Acutely Ill or Injured:

- **Ability to Participate:** The student's condition prevents the student from participating comfortably in school functions.
- **Need for More Care:** The condition requires more care than teacher/nurse can provide without compromising the needs of the other students.
- **Risk to Others:** Keeping the student in care poses an increased risk to the student or other students or adults with whom the child comes in contact as defined in

Managing Infectious Diseases in Childcare and Schools.

- D.D.C.A. will make the final determination when a student is able to return to school with Dr. release.

### Part I: Admission and Permitted Attendance

Children with the following conditions may be permitted to attend D.D.C.A. if they can:

- Participate in the usual daily activities with other students in every station.
  - School Connectors do not leave regular station duties and instruction to care for the ill child.
- Students with the following conditions may be permitted to attend:
- Students with the following respiratory illnesses may be asked to stay home to recover but may return to D.D.C.A. following recovery. These illnesses include - the common cold, croup, bronchitis, pneumonia, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and otitis media (ear infection).
  - Children who are carriers of an infectious disease in their stool or urine that can cause illness, but who have no symptoms. Exceptions include Shigella or Salmonella typhi.
  - Children with conjunctivitis (pink eye) who have a clear, watery eye discharge and do not have any fever, eye pain, or eyelid redness.
  - Children with a rash, but no fever or change in behavior.
  - Children with cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection, parvovirus B19, HIV or carriers of Hepatitis B.
  - Shingles (herpes zoster), children shall keep sores covered by clothing or a dressing until sores have crusted.
  - Children with influenza may return to D.D.C. when the child feels well enough.
  - Children with Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) does not need to stay home as long as the wound is covered, and drainage is contained.
  - Children who have ringworms. Children with ringworms should not go to the gym, swimming pools or play contact sports. Treatment may take at least four weeks.
  - Children with viral meningitis may return to D.D.C.A. when the child feels well enough.

Part II: Exclude Children with Following Conditions

To ensure the overall health and safety of all the children

we ask that you not bring your child to D.D.C.A. if one or more of the following exists:

- The illness prevents the student from participating comfortably in D.D.C.A. activities in all stations.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than teachers/coaches can provide without risking the health, safety, and supervision and instruction of other students.
- The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health care professional indicates that you can include the child in the D.D.C.A. activities:
  - Fever, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical professional evaluation finds the child able to be included at the facility.
  - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness like:
    - Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness,
    - Uncontrollable coughing,
    - Unexplained irritability, fussiness, or persistent crying
    - Difficult breathing
    - Wheezing
    - Other unusual signs for the child.
  - Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, hard stools, or medication that may cause gastrointestinal damage such as ibuprofen, naproxen, or aspirin.
  - Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines that the cause of the vomiting is not contagious, and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
  - Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than two hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
  - Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines that the child is noninfectious.
  - Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
  - Erythema infectiosum (5th Disease), keep child at home if fever is present.
  - Pink eye (conjunctivitis) with purulent discharge (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), child may go back to D.D.C.A. when all symptoms are gone.

- Scabies, until after the first treatment.
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend care.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after the child started medicine from the health care provider.
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after antibiotics are started.
- 15) Varicella-Zoster (Chickenpox), until all sores have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis, until five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment have been completed or 21 days of cough if no antibiotics are given.
- Mumps, child can go back to D.D.C.A. five days after start of symptoms or until symptoms are gone, whichever is longer.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after start of symptoms.
- Measles, until four days after onset of rash.
- Rubella, until six days after onset of rash.
- Herpes simplex, children with herpetic gingivostomatitis, an infection of the mouth caused by the herpes simplex virus, who do not have control of oral secretions, shall be excluded from D.D.C.A. Children with mild cases who do have control of their mouth secretions may not have to be excluded.
- Meningitis (bacterial), child may return to childcare 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

D.D.C.A. will notify the Dept. of Public Health when a child or employee have a diagnosed reportable illness. The list of reportable illnesses can be located at: [wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/conditions/notifiable/](http://wwwn.cdc.gov/nndss/conditions/notifiable/)

### Part III: Illness or Injury while in D.D.C.A.

If a student becomes ill while at D.D.C.A. and it is determined that the student should be excluded:

- Call 911 if appropriate
- Conduct First Aid or CRP steps if appropriate
- Contact immediately the parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent.
- Care for the student apart from other students
- Student will be cared for by Head of School or Nurse until parents arrive.



- Give appropriate attention and supervision until parent picks up the student.
- Give extra attention to hand washing and disinfecting surfaces.
- Use Universal Precautions
- An illness or Incident report will document the onset of the illness or Incident.

### Medication Administration

We will administer medication, prescription or over the counter, with the written authorization from the parent or guardian as well as from the prescribing physician. All medication will be stored in a locked container in the Administration office. We will make every effort to give medication as scheduled but circumstances may cause the time to be later than specified.

Medication will be administered by employees trained in medication administration. If possible, we request that medication be scheduled outside of D.D.C.A. program. D.D.C.A. will not administrate the first dose of medication. All medication needs to go home at the end of the period of time designated on the permission slip. Medication left at the center 10 days past the permission slip expiration will be discarded. To ensure compliance with DHS and Health Department regulations the following procedures must be followed:

**Over the Counter Medication:** Must come in original container and must not have expired. Medication must have a written dosage for the age of child being given the medication. If the bottle states it is for 2 years and older you must have a physician statement of dosage for children younger than 2 years. Questions about this please see the Academic or Program Coordinator.

**Prescription Medication:** The prescription medication must be brought to D.D.C.A. in the original labeled prescription container. For long-term medication, do not send more than one month's supply. Parent permission forms must be signed prior to administering the medication.

We will not give medication with verbal permission. Permission forms must be renewed every 30 days.

We will not supply any medications such as Tylenol or teething gel.

Devices (Epi Pen, nebulizer, inhaler): Parent or health care provider will provide written instructions on indications for use that include signs and symptoms that medication is needed. The parent will demonstrate the use of the device and special care after use to all staff who will be using the medication.

The D.D.C.A. will take extra precaution and assessments before agreeing to administer Prescription Medications. We advise all parent/guardians to administer Prescription Medications outside of D.D.C.A. program.

### Hand Washing Procedure

Children and employees will wash their hands using the following method:

1. Turn on water to a comfortable temperature.
2. Moisten hands with water and apply liquid soap to hands.
3. Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 20 seconds. Rub areas between fingers, around all nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and back of hands. Rinse hands under running water until they are free of soap and dirt and turn off water.
4. Dry hands

### Hand Washing Assistance

Teachers/coaches will provide guidance and practice opportunities to students to review proper handwashing techniques.

Students will either use a child size sink or stand on a safety step at a height that allows the child to reach the running water if needed.

### Situations that Require Hand Washing

All employees, volunteers, and students will wash hands at the times indicated below and at additional times as needed.

- Upon arrival for the day
- Before and after the following situations:
- Handling food or eating any meal
- Feeding a child
- Giving medications

- Playing in water that is used by more than one person (swimming pools)
- After the following situations:
  - All sports, music & performing arts, field trips, games, all activities.
  - Using the restroom or assisting a child in the restroom
  - Handling bodily fluids (e.g. mucus, blood, vomit, sneezing, open wounds or sores)
  - Handling uncooked food (especially raw meat and poultry)
  - Handling animals
  - Cleaning or handling the garbage
  - Playing outdoors

### Cleaning Schedule

D.D.C.A. uses the following cleaning schedule to maintain a clean facility:

- Daily cleaning
  - Countertops, tables, floors, doors, and handles.
  - Carpets and large rugs (vacuumed daily, carpet cleaning as needed).
  - Sanitize utensils, surfaces and equipment for all activities.
  - Sanitizes toilets, sinks, faucets daily or more often if needed.
  - Sanitize food preparation and service surfaces before and after use.
- Weekly cleaning
  - Uniforms (uniforms are cleaned more often as needed).
  - All materials, towels, and equipment as needed.
  - Sanitize coat rack areas, storage spaces, etc.

Additional cleaning and maintenance will be done as needed and all cleaning schedules may vary according to need and soiling.

### Tobacco use and prohibited substances

Tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs are prohibited on D.D.C.A. property, including D.D.C.A. vehicles, at all times. Smoking areas for employees will be designated.

### Injury

D.D.C.A. employees are trained in First Aid and CPR. If a child becomes injured the following steps will be taken:

1. An employee will assess the injury.
2. First aid will be administered as needed.
3. If there is a serious injury, staff will assess the need to call 911 and notify a parent or guardian.
4. If the injury is more than a minor bump or bruise, D.D.C. will make the decision to notify a parent or guardian.
5. The teachers/coaches will complete an accident report about the injury and the care given.
6. In the event of a dental emergency the child's dentist and parents will be contacted immediately. Emergency medical services may also be called if needed.

Accident/Incident reports are completed to document any incident that occurs at D.D.C.A. or as part of a D.D.C.A. activity that has the potential to leave a mark on the child's skin or if a mark is noticed during the day and an explanation has not been discussed between the parent and the teacher/coach when the child arrives at D.D.C.A.

D.D.C.A. will make every effort to report injuries but when students play or participate in an activity not every injury is reported by the student or noticed by the teachers/ coaches. The parent will be asked to sign the report and retain a copy. The original is kept at D.D.C.A. in the student's file.

### First Aid Kits

D.D.C.A. maintains at least one readily available first aid kit wherever children are in care or in stations. This includes one for field trips, outings, competitions, or events away from the center.

In addition, a first aid kit will be in each vehicle that is used to transport children to and from D.D.C.A. Each kit will be a closed container for storing first aid supplies, accessible to employees at all times but out of reach of children. First aid kits will be restocked after use, and an inventory will be conducted at least monthly.

### Emergency Healthcare Need

Upon enrollment or diagnosis, children who have special health care needs such as food allergies, seizures, or asthma must have an emergency action plan completed by their healthcare provider on file. The action plan will be updated at least annually.

D.D.C.A. employees are trained in First Aid and CPR. If a child becomes seriously ill the following steps will be taken:

1. An employee will assess the symptoms based on the emergency action plan.
2. First aid will be administered as stated in the plan.
3. If the action calls for administering emergency medication a supervisor will notify a parent or guardian. If a parent cannot be reached a designated emergency contact person will be called.
4. If the action plan requires life-saving medication, 911 will be called immediately.
5. A supervisor will remain with the child and provide care until EMS arrive.
6. The teacher/coach or supervisor will complete an illness report about the illness and the care given.

## Medical Emergencies

When an immediate response is required the following emergency procedures will be utilized:

1. First aid will be administered, and the emergency response team will be called if needed (911)
2. An employee will ride with the child by ambulance, if allowed to do so, to a local hospital or health care facility and will stay with them until a parent or guardian arrives.
3. The parent will be called as soon as possible. If a parent cannot be reached a designated emergency contact person will be called.
4. We will share with the medical personnel the contact information of the doctor, dentist, and hospital provided by the parent at registration including permission to obtain medical care.

## NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE

D.D.C. serves snacks and supper each program day during the school year and breakfast, lunch, snack, and supper during the summer.

There is no additional charge for meals or snacks.

D.D.C.A.'s kitchen staff prepares all of the meals and snacks to meet the State of Iowa's Child & Adult Care Food Program standards and represent different cultures.

D.D.C.A. works hard to make mealtimes an enjoyable learning experience.

Students are often served family style so that students can learn respect and responsibility and School Connector/Coaches can build relationships and instill values.

All children are encouraged to try each food on their plate. If a child does not like something or is not hungry, a clean plate is not mandatory, and the child is not forced to try something that they dislike.

Children are not rushed to finish their meal and food is never withheld as a disciplinary tactic. Menus are posted on the parent link on the D.D.C.A. website. Serving times are consistent with daily schedule station plans also posted on parent link of D.D.C.A. website.

Snacks and treats for special events and birthdays need to be store purchased and individually packaged. Please see the Academic or Program Coordinator before sending a birthday cake or cupcakes for birthdays. A doctor's note must be provided to serve milk other than those specified, and it must meet the nutritional guidelines of the Child and Adult Food Program.

School Connectors eat with the children and model trying a variety of foods, values that represent respect and responsibility and utilize Developmental Relationship strategies to impact students. Parents will inform School Connectors/Coaches of dietary changes and fill out the required paperwork for documentation.

## USDA and Dubuque Dream Center Academy Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law at U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

# Nondiscrimination Statement-Emergency Procedures

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632- 9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1)mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## Dietary Modifications

If dietary modifications are required based on a child's medical needs, D.D.C.A. will modify or supplement the diet on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the parents and the child's health care provider. Food from home is discouraged but if it must be brought the food must be stored in a container to maintain its temperature and given to the Kitchen Manager. Any meals brought by the parents must meet all the nutritional requirements for the intended meal and any leftovers will be discarded every day. For any questions concerning meals brought from home please contact the Academic or Program Coordinator. In addition, food will only be given at your child's scheduled mealtimes. Children with special dietary needs will need an Allergy Action Plan completed by the physician on file.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### School Evacuation

In an emergency situation, the children and employees will remain in designated safe areas on D.D.C.A.'s property unless instructed to leave by emergency personnel. D.D.C.A. employees will evacuate the children from the building using the fire evacuation plan or we will follow the specific instructions from the public officials who may be directing the evacuation. Transport of the children will occur only if it is unsafe to remain on the center's property. If it is deemed unsafe to remain on center property, the children will be taken to the Steeple Square southside of the center to await pick up by an authorized person. If necessary, the children will be taken to a designated local school. A continual effort will be made to notify parents through cell phones and notification will also be made through local radio stations. Before leaving the center the director or Administrative Staff on site will take the fieldtrip first aid kit, emergency book, and a cell phone.

### Labeled Emergency Exits

Emergency exits are clearly identified and visible at all times. The exits for escape are arranged or marked so the path to safety outside is unmistakable. As soon as children can learn to recognize exit signs and pathway markings, they will benefit from having these paths of escape clearly marked. Adults who come into the building as visitors need these markings to direct them as well.

### Access to Exits

An exit to the outside or a common hallway leading to the outside is directly accessible from every room. If it is necessary to pass through another room for direct access to the outside, the other room will not have a barrier or door that can be latched to prevent access through it. No obstructions will be placed in the corridors or passageways leading to the exits.

### Fire/Fire Drills

Session fire drills are required and are utilized by D.D.C.A. to train the employees and children how to respond quickly to a fire in an organized fashion. Fire escape routes are posted in every room with clearly marked maps and written instructions.



## Emergency Procedures Cont

Indirect care employees are assigned to help specific classrooms that have non-mobile children to evacuate the building. An administrator will check every classroom to make sure all children have evacuated safely.

When the fire alarm rings, the caregivers/School Connectors in each room will gather the children together, along with the attendance sheets and then check the door to the hallway. If the door is not hot, the caregivers will then check the designated escape route for fire. If the route is clear, the caregivers will then quickly escort the children to the designated outside meeting area. Exit routes are illuminated with battery powered emergency lights.

In the event of a real fire, employees will be given further directions by the fire department or D.D.C.A. Director on where to take the children. The Director will use the enrollment information and D.D.C.A. Staff cell phones to contact parents if we are unable to return to the building. If able to connect to the text alert system, we will send a mobile message to families.

If the escape route(s) is blocked, the caregivers will stuff blankets or towels at the base of the doors, keep the children on the floor below the rising smoke, remove curtains, open windows and wait for further assistance in escaping the building.

If a group is offsite at an activity, event or field trip when an actual fire occurs, then an employee would be designated to contact the group and keep them in a safe place until it is safe to return to the building.

### **Tornado Drills/Severe Weather/Shelter in Place**

Session tornado drills are required and are utilized by D.D.C.A. to train the employees and children how to respond quickly to a tornado in an organized fashion. Designated safe areas are posted in every classroom with clearly marked maps & written instructions. Indirect care employees are assigned to help specific classrooms that have non-mobile children or children using adaptive equipment to move to their designated safe area. An administrator will check every classroom to make sure all children arrive in their areas safely.

The designated safe areas at D.D.C.A. are the hallways surrounding the gym, interior rooms such as the restrooms and closets. The teachers and School Connectors in each room need to check the instructions posted in their classroom to see which room has been designated as their safe area.

Tornado drills will be announced over the intercom. The statement employees and children will hear is, "This is a tornado drill. "At that time, the teachers/School Connectors are to take the children, along with the attendance clipboard to their designated safe area.

Everyone will remain in the safe area and sing children's songs or read books to keep the children calm until informed that the drill is complete.

In the event of a real tornado, everyone will stay in the designated safe area until instructed that it is safe to come out and that weather conditions have improved. If the building has been hit by a tornado, children will be evacuated away from the structural damage and into the Jackson park area as quickly as possible and follow instructions from emergency personnel.

If a group is at an indoor activity, event or field trip when lightning is sighted, or the city sirens initiate a tornado warning, School Connectors will follow instructions at that particular site and will not leave that location. If group is on an outdoor activity or field trips, the School Connector will bring the children to the D.D.C.A. site or closest safe site.

### **Earthquake**

In the event of an earthquake, D.D.C.A. employees will take the children to the doorways of their classrooms, since these are the most structurally sound points in the building. Any doorway, including closets, is appropriate. An adult should remain with the children in each doorway. Employees may also instruct the children to crawl under the tables in the class or dining rooms to protect them from falling debris.

Children will be asked to squat in the doorways and hold onto the doorframe or each other. The adult should use encouraging words and remind the children to hang on even if objects would fall around them.



# Emergency Procedures Cont

After the movement of the building and ground stops, employees will comfort and count the children. Children will be escorted outside to a safe area, either in the playground or a parking lot and remain outside until the building is checked for safety and stability. If transportation to a city designated safe area is necessary, we will use D.D.C.A. vehicles to transport the children and employees.

## Flood

In the event of a flood, either internal or external, D.D.C.A. will be evacuated until such time that the building is safe to occupy. If parts of the building are safe to occupy, we will continue to provide care to as many children as possible.

## Bomb Threat

In the event that Dream Center Academy should receive a bomb threat the following procedure will be followed:

- The employee that answers the phone will listen to the caller very carefully and get as much information as they can by asking questions such as, “Where is the bomb?” and “What time will it go off?” They will pay close attention to the background noises during the call and determine whether the caller is a male or female, young or old.
- The building will be evacuated immediately and as quickly as possible, in an orderly manner.
- The call will be reported to the police department, and we will follow their instructions on where the children should be relocated to.
- Children’s parents will be contacted by using a mobile phone and emergency numbers.

## Chemical Spills

If an employee observes spilled chemicals in the building or on D.D.C.A. grounds, that person will determine if the chemicals have a noxious odor or fumes. If so, that person needs to alert the employees to remove any children from the area until the spill is cleaned. Employees should wear gloves and use paper towels to clean the spill. Place the used paper towels in a plastic bag and seal it. If the chemical spill is too large or is releasing a lot of irritating fumes, then the employee needs to call the local Fire Department and request the Hazardous Materials Intervention Team.

## Power Failure

In the event the D.D.C.A. loses all power, the D.D.C.A. will utilize back up battery operated lights, flashlights, or candles. D.D.C.A. has a gas stove and gas water heater, therefore we would still be able to prepare food for the children and the children would be able to wash their hands & faces. If the utility company indicated that the power will be out for an extended period of time and we cannot keep the building at a comfortable temperature, we would close the facility until the power is reinstated.

## Abduction

D.D.C.A. has a policy that requires employees to report unfamiliar individuals that seem to be watching the program or asking about certain children that attend. If we notice individuals in a vehicle, we bring the children inside, lock the doors and call the police. (See Code Red) In the event that a child is abducted while attending our program either from the center, activity, event or while on a field trip an employee will immediately report the abduction to police and call the child's parents. Employees are instructed to attempt to get a physical description of the person abducting the child as well as a possible description of the vehicle, license number, and direction it appeared to be heading. Administration would also notify the DHS Licensing Consultant of the abduction.

## Code Red/Lockdown

In an effort to protect all of the children that utilize D.D.C.A. programs, we have a plan in place to reduce the chance of children being removed from D.D.C.A. without authorization or from being harmed by an intruder. In any instance when we feel the safety of children is in question, the employees would be notified through our intercom system that Code Red is now in effect.

The following steps are followed during a Code Red:

1. All children must leave the designated areas and return to the safety of the building.
2. The security code system on the doors will be disabled so that all doors will be locked to anyone trying to enter.
3. The Dubuque Police will be contacted.
4. An administrator will supervise the admittance of any individuals entering the facility.

# Emergency Procedures Cont

## Lost/Missing Child

If a student is noticed to be missing, the DDCA School Connector will ask for the support of other Staff or Administrators to find the child. Administrators and staff will conduct an extensive search of the facility or designated areas that include classrooms, office, bathrooms, dining areas or other designated areas if the search involves an off-site field trip, activity, or event. After an extensive search is complete, and the child is not found, the parents and police will be notified. The Head of School or an Administrator will notify the Dubuque Police Department that a child is missing. A DHS and possible Law Enforcement investigation, the circumstances, and the safety level of the child when they are found will determine what future actions will be taken as it relates to the DDCA organization and Staff involved. An incident report will be completed.

## Immobile Children

If a student is immobile, in a wheelchair or on crutches, the elevator will not be accessible due to emergency purposes, in this case the DDCA will have two office staff safely carry the student down the stairs to the cafeteria in case of severe weather, or out the front door in the case we need to evacuate the building to the meeting site. If needed, we would work with the Physical/Occupational Therapists for the individual student to determine what might be best for the student. If we were to have an immobile child there would be office staff, assigned to make sure that student is evacuated safely during an emergency.

## Inclement Weather/Blizzard

When the area is experiencing inclement weather and/or blizzard conditions, D.D.C.A. puts the safety of the children and employees above all else. If a snow or ice storm starts while D.D.C.A. is open, parents will be contacted to pick up children early or at a designate time. D.D.C.A. will remain open until 3:30pm or earlier if all children have left for the day.

As a general rule, D.D.C.A. does not close as inclement weather approaches. However, we will close if it is determined that weather conditions will not allow D.D.C.A. to achieve mandated adult to child ratios and/or will not allow us to keep the driveways and sidewalks clear and safe for walking.

The decision as to whether or not to close is made by 6:00am. If the weather is bad or questionable and you are wondering if D.D.C.A. is closed, please call D.D.C.A. before leaving home. Our D.D.C.A. Text system, email, Facebook post, and D.D.C.A. website will indicate if D.D.C.A. is closed. If the system is busy keep trying because many employees and parents will be checking.

Please note that if D.D.C.A. is closed for the day, full time employees scheduled for the day will be paid their scheduled work hours.

[dia.iowa.gov/health-facilities/emergency-preparedness-homelandsecurity.iowa.gov](https://dia.iowa.gov/health-facilities/emergency-preparedness-homelandsecurity.iowa.gov)

## INCIDENT REPORTING

Recording incidents: Parents shall be notified on the day of the incident involving a child that includes: Minor Injuries, Minor changes in health status, minor behavior concerns, or incidents resulting in injury to a child.

Shall be verbally notified immediately when there is: A Serious injury to a child, an incident resulting in significant change in health status, and an incident includes a child being involved in inappropriate, sexually acting out behavior.

A WRITTEN record, fully documenting every incident, shall be provided to the parent or authorized person. This should be completed by staff that witnessed the incident and retained in the child file. Serious injuries and deaths must be reported to the Department within 24 hours.

## DISSEMINATION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Parents of students in the care of D.D.C.A. may review their student's file and obtain copies of that file, within a 2-week prior request time frame.

The parent/guardian who is interested in reviewing records is requested to schedule a time to review the file with Head of School or Principal.

The following persons, agencies, and organizations may have restricted access to student records without prior written consent of the parents. Any other access to student files/records shall be only upon written consent or upon court order or legally issued subpoena.

1. Government officials who have the authority to review records.

2. In connection with an emergency.

Note: Student files are reviewed, and inappropriate or impertinent materials removed periodically.

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

(FERPA) The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, limits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's educational records. Section 99.30 of the FERPA Regulations, in part, states: Except as provided in Section 99.31, an educational agency or institution shall obtain a signed and dated written consent of a parent or eligible student before it discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records. FERPA defines education records as those records that are (1) directly related to a student and (2) maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

DDCA may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless parents have advised the school to the contrary in accordance with school procedures.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow DDCA to include this type of information from a child's education records in certain school publications (graduation programs, drama productions, etc.). Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. If parents do not want DDCA to disclose directory information from their child's education records without prior written consent, they must notify the school in writing by September 15 of each school year.

# New Family Orientation

## NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION

The following check list will be used when registering a new family. The steps include:

- Family fills out online registration.
- Parent is contacted for student and parent onsite registration and orientation.
- Orientation and Tour of D.D.C.A. Academic and Activity Stations are conducted following orientation.
- Follow up call/email to answer questions.
- Family submits the deposit and all necessary paperwork. All forms must be received to schedule a start date.

ORIENTATION TOPIC and OUTLINE	
Description	Outline
Complete and Review completed paperwork for registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration card</li> <li>• Physical or health assessment</li> <li>• Iowa Certificate of Immunization</li> <li>• Transportation Authorization</li> <li>• Parent Handbook Signature Page</li> <li>• Tuition Express form</li> <li>• School hours review</li> <li>• Overview of handbook</li> <li>• Student/Parent Assessment</li> </ul>
Review check in/out process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review check in/out process</li> </ul>
Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour All D.D.C.A. Stations</li> </ul>
Introduce key staff members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet Teacher</li> <li>• Meet School Connectors</li> <li>• Meet Administrators</li> </ul>
Discuss forms of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Email updates</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>
Review School Schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Day Stations</li> <li>• After School Stations</li> <li>• Summer Stations</li> <li>• End of Session Awards</li> <li>• Parent Focus Group</li> </ul>
Academic Goals Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals and Outcomes</li> <li>• Expectations</li> <li>• Parent Partnership</li> <li>• Support System</li> </ul>
Spark Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals and Outcomes</li> <li>• Stages Student Development</li> <li>• Activity Handbook</li> </ul>
Character Development System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmental Relationships</li> <li>• Character Development</li> <li>• Behavior Management</li> </ul>
College and Career Readiness Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review</li> <li>• Goals and Outcomes</li> <li>• Benefits</li> </ul>
Equipment Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Dress Code Attire</li> <li>• Activity Attire &amp; equipment</li> </ul>
Child Safety Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Safety Highlights</li> </ul>
Support Intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Support and Resources</li> </ul>
Volunteer Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Focus Group</li> <li>• Program options</li> <li>• Application Process</li> </ul>
Schedule Highlights & Start Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start date</li> <li>• Parent/student transition dates</li> <li>• Important upcoming dates</li> </ul>

## HOW CAN I HELP

### Volunteers

We enjoy having volunteers join our Academic Center Academy, Meal Service, Spark Activities, or other relevant skill sets at the Dubuque Dream Center Academy.

All volunteers must be at least 16 years of age. If you would like to volunteer take the following initial step:

#### **Section I-Volunteer Application Process**

- Online Application ([dbqdreamcenteracademy.org](http://dbqdreamcenteracademy.org))
- Move cursor to “Get Involved” and click on “Volunteer Opportunities”
- Fill out online application and submit.
- An Administrator will contact you to set up an Interview and Organization Overview following a background check.
- If you are volunteering as part of a group or organization, the Interview and Organization Overview process will be scheduled and take place in a group setting format.
- The date and time of the Interview and Organization Overview is determined by availability of Administrators and Volunteer Prospect.
- Our background checks will determine whether or not there is a conviction of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state. All volunteers must pass both state and national criminal record & child and dependent adult abuse registry checks.
- Whether or not there is a communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety or well- being of the children.
- All volunteers must be informed of their responsibility as a mandatory reporter of child abuse.

### Sponsor a Student

#### **Dream Maker:**

\$6,000 supports one student through a FULL YEAR of Dream Center Academy and after school programming. See Student Sponsor Policy or Dream Center After School Program Handbook for more information.



## SCHOOL IMPACT MODELS

Iowa Association of Christian Schools

[iowachristianschools.org/](http://iowachristianschools.org/)

Association Of Christian Schools International

[acsi.org/](http://acsi.org/)

Hope Academy

[hopeacademympls.org/](http://hopeacademympls.org/)

Kingdom Collegiate Academies

[kccademies.org](http://kccademies.org)

Butler College Prep

[nobleschools.org/butler/](http://nobleschools.org/butler/)

Chicago Jesuit Academy

[chicagojesuitacademy.org/](http://chicagojesuitacademy.org/)

Tri-state Christian

[www.tscs.org](http://www.tscs.org)

Joshua Christian Academy

[gotjosh.org/](http://gotjosh.org/)

Royal Legacy Academy

[rlcawaterloo.org/](http://rlcawaterloo.org/)

Des Moines Christians

[www.dmcs.org/](http://www.dmcs.org/)

Search Institute

<https://www.search-institute.org/>

The Right to Read

[therighttoreadfilm.org/](http://therighttoreadfilm.org/)

Campaign for Grade Level Reading

<https://gradelevelreading.net/>

1

[https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1013&context=urban\\_iisc](https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1013&context=urban_iisc)

2

<https://gradelevelreading.net/>

3

<https://iowaccrr.org/resources/files/Data/FY19/5%20year%20trend%202014-2019/FY19%20Dubuque%20Trend.pdf>

4

[https://www.telegraphherald.com/news/tri-state/article\\_70514a5e-a0e3-5bf2-8ea7-bff2498f6551.html](https://www.telegraphherald.com/news/tri-state/article_70514a5e-a0e3-5bf2-8ea7-bff2498f6551.html)

5

<https://www.search-institute.org/>

6

<https://humanrights.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/media/2018%20Dubuque%20Data%20Report.pdf>

7

<https://www.search-institute.org/>

8

<https://www.search-institute.org/>

# Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

I have received an orientation to the Dubuque Dream Center Academy and have had an opportunity to meet with Administrators and Staff to discuss any questions I have.

**Sign Name**

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**Print Name**

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**Children's Name/s**

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## Acknowledgement of Receipt of Parent Handbook Effective August 23, 2024

The content of this parent handbook may be modified, revoked, suspended, terminated or changed at any time by our center.

Parent Acknowledgement By signing below I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies contained herein. I have received my copy of the handbook and I understand it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies and guidelines contained in this handbook and any revisions to it. I have received orientation to the program and have had an opportunity to tour the center, ask questions, and meet staff members.

Received this \_\_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

**Parent Signature**

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**Print Name**

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## For employee use only

### Employee Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies contained herein. I have received my copy of the handbook and I have had an opportunity to ask questions.

Received this \_\_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

**Employee Signature**

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**Print Name**

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